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MORTIMER DELMAR;

AND

HIGHFIELD TOWER.

TALES

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "CONRAD BLESSINGTON."

Whoever thinks a faultless piece to see, Thinks what ac'er was, nor is, nor e'er shall be; In everly work regard the writer's cad, Since nose can compass more than they intend; And, if the means be just, the conduct true, Applance, in solic of crivial faults, is due.

POPE

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON

SAUNDERS AND OTLEY, CONDUIT STREET.
1838.

459.



PRINTED BY B. BENSLEY.

TO A BELOYED MOTHER,

THIS

WORK IS INSCRIBED.

WITH

EVERY SENTIMENT OF AFFECTION,

BY

THE AUTHORESS.

.

PREFACE.

THE generous indulgence with which the first work of a young authoress was received by her friends, a few months since, has induced her to present herself again as a candidate for their favour. In doing so, however, she confesses she feels even more diffidence than at her former attempt, for then she was sensible that, if her efforts failed in conveying the entertainment she aimed at, she was secure of a safe retreat in her relinquishment of literary fame. Now, however, having received encouragement, she has a character to sustain, a certain opinion, an expectation, to justify. In short, comparisons may be

drawn between her productions: and, although she has striven to raise herself in the eyes of her friends, she knows how often the best endeavours are unsuccessful, and, consequently, how uncertain is the sentence in store for her. Still, she hazards the withering influence of their frown, for the possibility of their approving smile, which, she hopes, will crown her labours in the compilation of these Tales; the leading features of which have, unhappily, to boast a fatal reality. The connecting link of fiction has been made use of to increase the interest of the work, which is now launched on the stream of public opinion, with the hope that its voyage may be propitious.

Lon ion, 1938.

MORTIMER DELMAR.

CHAPTER I.

An union form'd, as mine with thee,
Not rashly, or in sport,
May be as fervent in degree,
And faithful in its sort,
And may as rich in comfort prove,
As that of true fraternal love.

COWPER.

"WE shall meet again soon, I hope, Mortimer," said George Heron to his friend the Honourable Mortimer Delmar, as he mounted the box of the coach, which was to convey him finally from Oxford to the home of his childhood.

"Certainly," replied the latter, "I shall make a point of coming to you in the course of the autumn, besides, you will probably vol. 1.

B

be in town at Christmas, where we shall, doubtless, encounter each other."

"If you do not learn to love Ireland too much, and stay there," returned George significantly.

"No fear of that," said the other with a gay laugh.

Another grasp of the hand completed the parting, the ostler snatched the clothes from the horses backs; the coachman smacked his whip, and the vehicle rolled up the High Street at a rapid rate, and was soon out of sight.

Such was the separation of two young collegians, at the conclusion of their studies at the great seat of learning; and such their anticipations of re-union, but hope, ever fallacious, proved so in the present instance; many months rolling away before they saw each other again.

Sir Thomas Heron, the father of one of the friends, had been for some years in declining health; and when George reached

home he found it was judged advisable, by his medical attendants, to remove the baronet to a southern and more genial clime. The family was small, consisting only of Lady Heron, one son and daughter, and a niece; therefore the change was soon effected, and Naples became the residence of Sir Thomas for the winter. Excursions to various parts of the continent occupied George, until the increased debility of his father, and his urgent wish to return home while he had yet strength to do so, obliged him to attend his family to England. The invalid survived the journey, but, on his arrival at his destination, was so dreadfully exhausted, that he lingered in a distressing state a couple of months; when the thread of life was separated, and he descended to the silent tomb.

After due time had been given to the affliction consequent upon such an event, the young baronet proposed to visit one of his estates in the north of England; which,

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from his father's ill health, had been much neglected, and which he himself had never visited. His mother and sister seconded the plan with avidity; the former with the view of gratifying her son, whom she loved almost to adoration; and his sister Beatrice, from her anxiety to remove her mother from painful associations. Thus it was determined that Heron Castle should again be the resort of its owners, and orders accordingly were given for the old mansion to be prepared for the reception of its lord.

The constant illness of her late husband had confined Lady Heron for some years entirely to the country, where alone his disorder found the slightest alleviation; consequently, Beatrice knew but little of the pleasures of society, and felt no regret in exchanging the retirement of the Hall for the seclusion of Heron Castle. In each, her mother and brother, the first objects of her solicitude were the same, and in seeing them happy she derived her own contentment.

Leaving his mother to superintend the removal of the family, Sir George proceeded to the metropolis, where he purposed remaining a week, previous to accompanying his lady mother northward; and was walking up Bond Street one day, when a familiar face caught his eye within the deep recesses of a handsome cab, drawn by a magnificent thorough-bred. Before he had time to make an effort to arrest the attention of the Lilliputian groom, the top of whose hat was scarcely visible above the head of the carriage, the owner having recognised him, drew up at the pavement, and the hand, and gratified face of Mortimer Delmar were thrust forward to welcome his friend.

"Where in the name of wonder did you drop from, my dear Heron? I thought you were still on your travels," was the immediate question of his honourable friend after the first salutations were over.

"I have been returned about six months, Mortimer, but have been too much occupied since that time to be much in town."

"Well, I shall not let you escape me now, so come, George, get into the cab; we cannot say a word here, and we will take a drive round the park while we talk."

"I am sorry I have some business for my mother which must be done, Mortimer: where shall I find you in the morning?"

"Nonsense, George, get in; my horse, cab, and worthy self, are all at your service this afternoon, and we will go wherever you please."

"Such an offer is not to be withstood," said George, as he seated himself beside his friend, who put question after question to him as they drove down to St. James's Street.

Having satisfied these, George in his turn demanded the pursuits of Delmar, since they parted nearly two years before.

"The account of my proceedings is soon told," said he, "and differs but little from yours, George. The winter and early spring have been passed with my family in London, and the summer and antumn between my father's estates in Ireland, or travelling in that island and Scotland."

"And what do you purpose doing this year, Mortimer?"

"That point is at present undetermined. I have thought of the continent, but my father is so anxious I should again accompany him to Ireland, that I fancy I must go there for a time, at least."

"Perhaps you would not object to spend a month or two with me at Heron Castle?"

"Object, my dear fellow! No: I should like it of all things: I delight in the romantic scenery of our northern counties."

"A hearty welcome and rural sports are all I can promise you, Mortimer, and if such will compensate for your journey, I shall be most happy to entertain you."

"Fix the time, Heron, and I am your man,--Ireland may go to the devil, before I relinquish the pleasure of a month of

your society for the charms of her wild hills and half starved peasants."

"We are to set off this day week," answered the baronet, "and shall not reach the castle for four days. I suppose my mother will require a week at least to get the house in complete order; ladies have a thousand and one little nothings to arrange, which we know not of, and they would be miserable if they were interrupted; therefore I must indulge the good lady, and determine your visit for the last week in August,—I am sorry to put it off so late, but you see it is unavoidable."

"Never mind, George, I shall find plenty to do until that time. My father does not start for the emerald isle for a fortnight, and I am engaged every day, two or three deep, until then, for fancy fairs, fêtes champêtres, gipsey parties, water excursions, and fifty others, of one sort or another."

"Why, Mortimer, I did not suppose you were so fond of those kind of things."

"No, nor am I, but I have a sister, George, who likes them, and you know that

Where there is a lady in the case,
All other things of course give place:

but tell me, how John Bullism suits you, after continental refinement?"

"Oh, admirably! I have not dispensed with my taste for old English comforts."

They continued to converse on various topics during an hour's drive, when Mortimer drove George to Grillon's Hotel, and having deposited him there with many assurances that he would be at the castle by the 28th of August, he turned his horse's head towards Hanover Square, where his father, Lord Fitz Eustace, then resided.

Passing over the subsequent fortnight, which was spent by the Herons in all the bustle and discomfort of a change of abode, the reader must suppose them partially domiciled at the castle. The party were assembled round the breakfast table some

days after their arrival, when the letters were brought in. Sir George turned his over carelessly, scrutinising the various handwritings; as he did so, he recognised the crest of Mortimer Delmar on one of the seals, which he instantly broke, and having perused the contents, turned to lady Heron, saying, "Mother, this letter apprises me that Mortimer Delmar will be here in the course of to-morrow. I think I told you I had asked him to spend some time with me prior to his trip to Ireland."

"I have some recollection of such an intimation, my dear George," answered her ladyship, "though I was too much engaged at the time to pay much attention to it, but you know, however, that any friend of yours is welcome to me. I only hope you will be able to furnish him with entertainment here."

"There is no fear of that, my dear mother, as he is one of the best fellows in the world."

- "What kind of a person is he, George?"
 enquired his sister. "Is he domestic?"
- "I really don't know, Beatrice," said George laughing, "but perhaps you may render him so if you try. He is very amiable, and, when he pleases, a delightful companion."
- "Is he personable, George?" said his cousin Mary Beaumont, an orphan, who had been brought up with his sister.
- "Oh! a perfect Adonis, sweet coz; so prepare yourselves to meet perfection, young ladies, and remember—to-morrow will produce this handsome, agreeable stranger. I dare say you will like him; upon my word I fear he will soon cut me out."
- "Not while you continue so amiable, dear George," said his sister.
- "Or so handsome," added his cousin, archly.
- "I am quite overpowered with gratitude for your flattering opinions, ladies, and will take the liberty of retiring from their over-

whelming influence. I shall be ready to walk with you in the afternoon, mother."

With these words, George made his escape, leaving his relatives to discuss the arrival of the expected visiter.

To those accustomed to spend their lives in the country, at a distance from much society, the slightest change is hailed with pleasure; a trifling incident furnishes an interesting topic of conversation for days, and therefore the arrival of an entire stranger, with his probable variety of peculiarities, was ample food for conjecture in the ideas of the cousins, the eldest of whom had scarcely yet attained her twentieth year.

Beatrice was all that men esteem most in the female character, timid, gentle and retiring, she confided more on others than perhaps was necessary, but her conciliating disposition endeared her to all around her; and her virtues, which were of a passive, ruther than of an active, class, had shewn themselves on the death of her father in her devotion to her mother, and a total forgetfulness of self.

Mary Beaumont had just entered her eighteenth year, and, on the contrary, was all life and spirits, ever at the head of any scheme for amusement, and ready to think or act with any one as occasion might dictate; light hearted and affectionate, but hasty and thoughtless, she often did and said things by which she unintentionally offended those unacquainted with her character. The most dangerous failing, however, she possessed was a disposition to coquetry, at present the offspring of her wildness, and which her kind aunt hoped might be overcome as her reason matured, or be subdued by the retirement observed by the family.

The young baronet was fortunately a compound of the two, cheerful, sensible, and well informed; he could participate in the tranquility of his sister, or the wild

gaicty of his cousin, and with all his family was a deservedly cherished friend. Ardently attached to his mother, he consulted her happiness with the most affectionate solicitude, which was reflected in her maternal fondness, which was unbounded for both her children; though it might perhaps be more apparent in George's case, from the support a mother naturally finds in a son, whose capabilities preponderate over those of a daughter. Not easily roused to anger, when once offended, he was not quickly appeased: indeed the principal defect in his character was an obstinate adherence to opinions once formed, but his ordinary amiability prevented this quality from being conspicuous.

The next day, George prevailed upon Beatrice and Mary to accompany him early in a ramble through the woods, which girdled the park; and a long morning was passed in the enjoyment of the wild beauties of the extensive domain. They at length

determined to retrace their way to the castle, and seated themselves on a rustic bench to rest, before doing so. Thence the eye ranged over a fertile valley, where peace and plenty seemed to reign. Corn and pasture land, interspersed with luxuriant plantations of the beautiful family of Fir, in many places were continued even to the summits of the numerous hills, which rose within a short distance. A rivulet issued from a diminutive lake in the high part of the valley, and, after meandering within sight for the distance of half a mile, was lost behind a hill, over the shoulder of which rose the road, which might be traced in its various windings, for a couple of miles before it reached the gate that gave ingress to Heron Park. Lone cots peeped here and there from their verdant concealments, and in one spot the sun revealed the site of a hamlet, by darting his rays on the spire of its little church.

After contemplating the scene for a few

minutes in silence, Mary exclaimed "Look! look! Beatrice, do you not see a carriage coming down the hill yonder? it may be Mr. Delmar. George, do you not mark the spot? It is now passing that rick yard. Is he likely to come in his own carriage?"

- "Not improbable, Mary," said George, attentively eyeing the object pointed out as it descended slowly into the valley. "It is a phaeton, as I am alive! no doubt it is he. Come, let us go towards the lodge, Beatrice."
- "How delightful to bring his phaeton and horses down here!" said the gay girl, as she placed her arm within that of her cousin George. "Is it not delightful, Beatrice? We shall have such charming drives everywhere."
- "I suppose I must drive in sober solitude now, Mary; you will scarcely look at my pony chair, when a phaeton is likely to be at your service."
 - "Perhaps not, George, variety is so

charming; and I must quote your own saving, in extenuation of my apparent inconstancy—that for want of a better a worse must do. The pony phacton was delightful to a pedestrian in hot weather, until a more exalted mode of conveyance were attainable."

- "Fie, Mary," said Beatrice, "how can you be so fickle? Now I have not the slightest wish to ride in any other than George's little phaeton, which I am sure is very pretty."
- "Undoubtedly, dear cousin, and I will leave you in the full possession of it. Remember, George, I shall come back to you when Mr. Delmar is gone."
- "Take care, Miss Mary, you do not find your place occupied, I will not engage for its not being so."
- "Nay, George, that will be very spiteful, you must promise not to repulse an erring spirit."
 - "Do not presume too much upon my

disposition to overlook your peccadilloes, Mary; but perhaps Delmar may be going to send the phaeton elsewhere, and then you will be punished for your disdain of me and my conveyance."

- "Really, George, I did not know you could fabricate such an unkind suspicion, but I will have my revenge."
- "Do your worst, fair cousin, I fear you not," replied George.

They had now reached the road leading up the park about half a mile below the castle, and the carriage, which they had lost sight of some time in the bottom, again emerged from the wood at the entrance of the park, and crept up the hill towards them.

Mortimer Delmar relinquished the reins to his groom, and sprung lightly to the ground, when he recognised George, and raising his hat politely to the young ladies, as his friend introduced them, turned with them to the castle.

Young Delmar was tall, with a form remarkable for its perfect symmetry; his complexion was of that clear brown which creates in the mind of the beholder the presumption of his having first drawn breath beneath the influence of a western sun; which idea was strengthened, if not confirmed, by his large expressive eyes, which sparkled with pleasure at sight of his friend. His features were regular, and Mary thought, as her sharp eye reconnoitred his countenance, she had seldom seen any one so prepossessing.

- "How did you find your journey, Mortimer? Dull, I suppose, travelling alone?" said the Baronet.
- "By no means, George, as you will believe when I tell you I was accompanied by my sister as far as Nottingham, where she is engaged to stay the summer; and the face of nature is so attractive here, that I have had ample occupation in admiring the beautiful scenery."

- "Are you fond of the picturesque or the sublime, Mr. Delmar?" inquired Beatrice somewhat timidly.
- "I scarcely know, Miss Heron, how you define the terms, but if I comprehend your meaning, I should say I prefer the picturesque, though perhaps, had I been able to participate more in the sublime, I should be more capable of answering your question correctly. I am sorry to be obliged to confess myself unacquainted with the magnificent continental scenery so much vaunted, and with which you are probably well acquainted."
- "No, indeed, I have but very partially visited the romantic spots to which you refer. We were stationary at Naples almost all the time we were abroad."
- "Have you forgotten, Beatrice," exclaimed Mary, "that you accompanied George through part of Switzerland? and by your account, at the time, you were quite satisfied with the grandeur of it."

"Yes," said George laughing, "Beatrice thought the precipices, rocks, and chasms rather too numerous and dangerous in that trip, I believe."

His sister smiled, as she replied, turning to Mortimer: "My brother and cousin condemn my timidity and want of taste, Mr. Delmar, but I must own that England furnishes ample beauties for me without looking farther."

"You must permit me to subscribe to your opinion," answered Mortimer, fixing his eyes for an instant on her naturally pale but delicately formed features.

Mary's dark eye sparkled at the compliment conveyed in this speech, but Beatrice observed it not, and George said, "Your father, I suppose, has left London, Mortimer?"

"Yes, he was to start on Friday last, George, and intended crossing yesterday, which plan was most likely effected, as the wind was favourable."

- "How long does he propose staying?"
- "Five or six months, at least, for he is one of those Irish proprietors who think it incumbent upon them to spend a certain portion of the year upon their property, for the good of their peasantry; and I must say, I perfectly agree with him in that particular, however unpleasant the banishment may be."
- "But is not Ireland a charming country, Mr. Delmar?" inquired Mary.
- "Certainly, but however much I admire its rural attractions, I still prefer England for its society, its refinement, its industrious and happy people. Here is no daily aunoyance of brawls, outrages, Orangemen or Whitefeet; no religious hatred, no starving population; added to which, I was educated in this country, therefore I can scarcely be condemned for being attached to it."
- "Why no, certainly not by me, when I am so vain of my country, and cannot

disguise my natural aversion to anything Irish."

" Mary," interposed Beatrice, gently, "you forget what you are saying."

"Oh no, I did not cousin, but Mr. Delmar having disclaimed his affinity with that country, I am at liberty to say what I think. I did not intend to be personal, Mr. Delmar," continued the thoughtless girl, "you will soon find out what a giddy creature I am, and appreciate my words accordingly."

"I assure you, Miss Beaumont, I do not think any apology necessary. After what I had just said, you were at liberty to say anything of a country, even before a native; but though there are some things to deprecate in Ireland, there are also many to love and admire; which you may perhaps some day have an opportunity of discovering, and of altering your assertion of everything Irish being hateful."

Mary's cheek flushed, but having now

reached the castle, she followed Beatrice to their room in order to dress for dinner; while George led his friend into the drawing room to introduce him to Lady Heron.

- "Well! Beatrice," said Mary, as she arranged her natural ringlets before the glass, "what do you think of Mr. Delmar?"
- "I have not yet formed any opinion, Mary; if you ask me a week hence, I shall be better able to tell you."
- "Not able to tell me under a week, Beatrice! why I decided in a moment. I mean his appearance, not his mind. You recollect George said he was an Adonis, and, although I cannot quite agree to that, he is certainly handsome. His figure is beautiful, and his eyes, Beatrice—did you observe them?"
- "I thought them very fine, Mary, but so expressive that I dreaded encountering their gaze, and he is dark as a West Indian."
 - "Why, Beatrice, you used to like dark

people; his complexion is what I call clear

"Certainly, dear Mary, it is brown enough, but it is of little consequence whether he be handsome or not, provided he be pleasant."

"True, Beatrice, therefore we will not dispute about his appearance."

The cousins then descended to the drawing room, where they were soon summoned to dinner. A stroll on the lawn occupied the time until tea, after which George opened the piano, saying "Come, which of you ladies are inclined to indulge me with a little music?"

"I am, George," said Mary quickly, taking her seat immediately and commencing a brilliant overture, which she per-ormed with great execution; while George turned over the leaves of her book, and Mortimer stood near, lending an attentive ear to the masterly strains.

"Are you fond of music, Mortimer?" faidhis friend.

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- " Not enthusiastically; as an amusement I like it."
- "Are you a performer, then?" asked Mary.
 - "A very poor one, Miss Beaumont."
- "Ah! it is all very right to be diffident, but I dare say you play well. What instrument do you prefer, the flute or violin?"
- "Really my performance is very trifling, Miss Beaumont, but I have always given the preference to the flute."
- "You must allow us to judge of your musical powers, Mr. Delmar. I hope you have brought your flute with you. Little private concerts are so delightful. I often wish I could make George learn to accompany us, but he is by far too idle. I believe he would listen all day to Beatrice and myself, but will not take the trouble to play with us, though his violin is lying quite useless."
- "It is quite useless, Mary," said George laughing, " since it has got broken on our

journey from London, but independent of that, I know I should hurt your vanity very much if I did not ask you to play to me, which I might not do so frequently if I were to renovate my violin."

"And it is only to flatter our vanity that you are so urgent for music every night, George? Remember that, Beatrice, I shall not be so complaisant in future after that speech, I will not play to you again for a month: that will be an excellent punishment. I fancy you will be very glad to flatter my vanity again."

"Certainly I shall, Mary; for it is always a pleasure to me to gratify you."

"There, Mary," said Beatrice, " that speech ought to liquidate the other, I am sure: do you not think so, Mr. Delmar?"

"Undoubtedly, I think it is a compensation," said he.

"Come, Mary," said George, "play again, to let me see you bear no malice."

When she had concluded, Mortimer turned

to Beatrice, saying, "Will you not favour us. Miss Heron?"

- "It is too late I fear to-night," answered she, "but another time I shall be very happy to do so."
- "I suppose you anticipate Mr. Delmar's accompaniment, Beatrice," said Mary in a half whisper.
- "Miss Heron had better not wait for it, I can assure her," said Mortimer.
- "Because we shall be quite eclipsed I suppose. Come, Beatrice."
- "I must beg to be excused to-night, I see my mother is fatigued now, and it is getting late." So saying, she prepared to retire, and the rest following her example, the inmates of the castle were soon buried in sleep.

CHAPTER II.

And, fashion'd all to harmony alone, Know they to seize the captivated soul, In rapture warbled from love breathing lips; To teach the lute to languish.

THOMSON.

The following day was devoted by the young people to revealing the rural beauties of the immediate neighbourhood to their guest; and the evening found them so fatigued that they separated earlier than usual, without having either required or assisted at the accustomed instrumental recreation.

As the party rose from the breakfast table

- "Yes, certainly, if I can prevail on any body to accompany me. Perhaps, as the day promises fine, I may hope for the honour of escorting some of the ladies?"
- "Mother," said the baronet, "are you for a drive to-day?"
- "I think not, my dear, my place will be better occupied by Mary or your sister, as I am not very partial to a high carriage."
- "May I then solicit your company, Miss Heron?" asked Mortimer; "your brother will be one of the party."
- "Perhaps you will allow me to resign in favour of my cousin, Mr. Delmar, as she is very fond of driving out."

Mary coloured slightly, as she replied. "You are very kind, Beatrice, but I will not deprive you of your pleasure; I will stay with my aunt."

"Oh! there is room for all," said Delmar, I need not take my servant. What time shall I order the phaeton? Two o'clock?"

"Yes," answered George, "that is the

time we generally go out. Come along, Mortimer. You will be ready at two, girls."

"Do not fear us, George," said his cousin, with a triumphant look, as the young men left the room. "Now, Beatrice," she continued, "for the ride I promised you—are you not delighted?"

"Not so highly as you seem to be, Mary," returned she, "though I dare say we shall find it very pleasant."

"To be sure we shall. I wonder, however, George did not oppose our going, as he is so jealous of us."

"Of yourself only, you should say, Mary."

"Nonsense, Beatrice, he does not care a pin for me. However," she continued, turning away quickly to conceal the heightened hue upon her cheek, "I must go and gather the flowers my aunt asked me for, instead of wasting my time here," hastening out of the room as she spoke.

Mary Beaumont had detected, within the

last few months, a tender solicitude of manner, on George's part, towards her, which she felt her individual sensations replied to: she was attached to him, and felt that the power she possessed over him was unbounded, yet, being one of the most light-hearted beings in the world, she often liked to tighten the reins by which she held him, and torment him with the lash of her innocent raillery. At times, George was inclined to resent her badinage, but she knew how far to go, and a kind word would soon reinstate matters between them: but a casual observer would never have suspected that their breasts were the receptacles of the tender passion. Lady Heron and Beatrice, however, saw, though they had not noticed, the mutual attachment; to the former the connection was not unpleasant, for Mary occupied a place in her affection next to her daughter; and in point of fortune, she was no unfit match for George, being mistress, at the age of oncand-twenty, of twenty thousand pounds. Beatrice loved her as a sister, and knew no other friend to whom she could so pleasingly resign the tender assiduities she had ever been accustomed to lavish on her brother; and the hint she had just given Mary of George's partiality was almost, if not quite, the first intimation she had received of her friends perception of her feelings, and, with the natural shyness of youth and innocence, she shrank from the idea of any one being acquainted with her inmost thoughts.

Two o'clock brought the phaeton to the door, and Mortimer handed Beatrice in, taking his place beside her, while her brother and cousin occupied the back seat. The retiring Beatrice would gladly have changed places with the volatile Mary, but she knew not how to excuse herself from occupying the seat which etiquette pointed out for her, and she accepted Mortimer's attentions with modest grace.

"Is not that a magnificent prospect," Delmar?" said George, as he leant over the back of the front seat, "the Cheviots are clearly visible from this elevation."

"Ycs," replied his friend, "it is very extensive, but I think the view of the valley, from the garden-seat in Heron Park, which you pointed out to me yesterday, much more beautiful; the country here is verging more into the sublime than I like—do you not think so, Miss Heron?"

"Rather indeed," replied Beatrice, smiling, "these towering black rocks, which arise above us, and seem suspended by a thread, make me tremble, lest at the moment of our passage, they should be dislodged, and carry death and destruction in their fall."

"They are somewhat terrific, certainly," said Mortimer, casting his eyes up to the objects indicated, "but as these works of Nature's promiscuous hand have probably

stood for ages; I think we need not be under any apprehension."

"Oh! no, I do not think there is any danger, but I am sometimes nervous in such scenes."

"I can assure you, Mortimer," said George, "that however timid Beatrice may describe herself to be, I have seen her in many dangerous situations, and get through them better than those who professed more nerve; because, in moments of difficulty, or danger, her solicitude for others so greatly superseded individual alarm."

"And I can assure you also, Mr. Delmar," said Mary, "that you may give entire credence to George's praise, for he generally ridicules a young lady's most strenuous efforts at tranquillity in danger. He never gave me credit for a grain of courage, though I did not scream or faint when the carriage was overturned on the brink of a precipice, in Switzerland, while my aunt

and Beatrice were ten minutes coming to their senses."

- "True," said her cousin, laughing, "but you ought to tell Delmar the whole story. She and I were walking in perfect safety behind the carriage, while Beatrice had her arm broken."
- "Well, George, but you know I was very much frightened."
- "Undoubtedly, but you had nothing to scream for, as I have told you before."
- "Well, I see you always oppose me, George, so I shall say no more to you."
- "A dreadful punishment, when I have Beatrice and Mortimer," answered George, smiling.
- "Pray, Miss Heron, whose house is that," enquired Mortimer.
- "It belongs to a gentleman of the name of Cummerford, but as he is abroad for his health, it is at present unoccupied. It is a place well worth a morning's inspection, as the pictures are fine. Were I the owner,

I think nothing short of health would be powerful enough to detain me from the enjoyment of so fine a property."

"Did more of our landed proprietors think so, Miss Heron, we should not see so . many fine places deserted in this country; while every part of Europe is overrun with English and Irish, who spend their money lavishly upon strangers, and never think of the toil and trouble sustained by their unfortunate tenantry in furnishing wherewithall to satisfy their luxurious habits. If the industrious labourer were to see his landlord in the enjoyment of his income, and his money scattered around him, by which means it might return to enrich the sources whence be derives his wealth, he would be contented; whereas now, his rent once paid in, never returns to him in any shape, but goes out of the country to benefit strangers."

"It is but too true," said Beatrice, "still, it is hard upon persons of small means to stay here, where money does not go half so far as it does abroad."

"Certainly, but it is still more severe upon the industrious poor, and where a great good is to be attained, a slight evil must be disregarded. The aggrandizement of a whole people should not be sacrificed for individual well being."

"You are quite a patriot, Mr. Delmar." replied his companion smiling.

"I am happy you account me such, though I fear I can scarcely feel justified in accepting the appellation, unless I should eventually be able to prove my words."

"Which I doubt not you will do when in your power," returned Beatrice, gently. Mortimer bowed his acknowledgments, applied the whip to his horses, and conversed on various light topics the remainder of the ride.

Beatrice, that evening, at her brother's request, consented to officiate at the instrument, and though her execution might be less striking than that of her cousin, it far excelled Mary's in sweetness.

"Now for 'Auld Robin Gray,' Beatrice." said George, "I love to hear you sing that." -She complied, and Mortimer scarcely dared breathe for fear of losing a sound, as her exquisitely toned voice murmured the pathetic words. What youth of three and twenty, with a particle of harmony in his composition, could hear the bewitching vocal strain, breathed sweetly from the parted lips of a young and lovely woman, without sensations of the purest pleasure! Frigid must he the temperament which is dead to the charm of a rich and cultivated voice! young Delmar was not one of those: as he stood somewhat behind Beatrice, his eye was rivetted upon the fair songstress, and for a moment after she ceased, the delightful melody seemed still to enrapture him.

"Beautiful!" he ejaculated in an under tone, then seeing the blush which his unqualified praise had called forth, he added, "Miss Heron need not fear competition with any one, possessing such skill and judgment." Beatrice made no reply, but sang the air her brother placed before her. It was one of the Irish melodies, and again Mortimer became absorbed. A tender feeling for the fair authoress of the pleasing sounds crept over him, and he felt he could have listened for hours; but the song was concluded in a few minutes, and his acquaintance did not permit him to request a continuation.

Thus passed that and many succeeding evenings. Mary prevailed upon Mortimer to produce his flute, and, notwithstanding his reluctance, engaged him to accompany her performances; and the evenings, thus devoted to music, concluded days spent in active warfare upon the feathered or finny tribes. Sometimes they would go out coursing, and Beatrice and Mary would accompany them to witness the sport; or they would ride or drive in the numerous beautiful roads, which intersected the country. During the month which followed his arrival, Mortimer's intercourse with the Heron family had

ripened into a perfect intimacy; he was regarded by all as a friend, and his attachnent to George, which time and distance had cooled, though not eradicated, was restored to more than its former warmth. Mary he found the gay companion, but in Beatrice, there was ever a reserve, a shrinking within herself which charmed him, for, when able to draw her out, he was delighted with her conversation. Great part of her shyness wore off, however, in a week or two, and she received his attentions with ease. That her society possessed charms for him above that of the rest of the family, he was fully aware: but whether she were influenced in the same manner towards him was not discernible; for she carefully avoided giving him the slightest clue to the nature of her sentiments. She was not unconscious of his partiality, but not only her timidity, but her principles forbade her entertaining a preference for any man, or at least permitting it to appear, until she had fully ascertained the

nature of his feelings; and as yet, although Mortimer was attentive and solicitous to please her, he had not stepped beyond the bounds prescribed by courtesy.

This was the state of their mutual feelings when, one evening, as Mortimer was turning over the pages of Beatrice's music book, while she played a piece he had chosen, Mary said, "Come, Mr. Delmar, you half owned this morning that you could sing, so pray let us be favoured with one of these melodies."

"Excuse me, Miss Beaumont, I never owned any thing of the kind. You taxed me with the fact of being overheard humming, and you may have magnified my poor stanza into a song; but the pleasure of listening to your cousin preponderates so greatly over that derivable from hearing me, that I cannot consent to assist in the vocal part of the performance."

"Nonsense, I dare say you are quite

au fait; remember, you said the same thing about your flute, I am not to be taken in twice; besides, I am sure Beatrice and George will back my suit—Come—what will you sing? 'Oh! give me back my Arab steed,' I think is a very good one. Pray accompany him, Beatrice, to encourage him."

"Indeed, Miss Beaumont," said her victim turning away, half vexed by her importunity, "you overrate my powers."

"Prove it to us, Mr. Delmar," said Beatrice, smiling.

"Is it your wish I should accompany you, Miss Heron?" enquired Mortimer, again approaching the instrument.

"If agreeable to you," she replied, colouring slightly, as she observed the expression of his eye, as he heard her answer, and prepared to fulfil her request. His voice was rich and powerful, and the bantering of Mary, accompanied by Beatrice's quiet commendation, awaited him when he had finished; and the latter gently reproached him for having deprived them so long of the pleasure they had just experienced.

"Had I thought I could have afforded you any satisfaction, Miss Heron, I would have yielded earlier to your cousin's solicitations; but I believe I was selfish enough to prefer listening to you, rather than contribute to your amusement."

"Not an uncommon fault," answered Mary, looking at George. "You gentlemen are the most exigeant beings in the creation, while you scarcely ever do any thing to requite our kindness."

"You give us an indifferent character, Miss Beaumont," said Mortimer.

"Not worse than you deserve, believe me Mr. Delmar," returned Mary, as she lighted her candle to retire. "I shall not forget, also, that you permitted the insidious wiles of Beatrice to vanquish your determination not to sing, and resisted my open attacks."

As she left the room, her roguish smile called a tinge of colour into the faces of Mortimer and Beatrice; and their eyes meeting at the same moment, completed the confusion of the latter.

"I find, Miss Heron," said Delmar smiling, "your cousin will not permit any opposition to her will to pass with impunity. She always watches her opportunity for revenge."

§"Have you only just discovered that?" Said George. "To my cost I have known and felt it long.

Sweet is revenge-especially to women,

you recollect; and, provoking as her triumphs are, I must submit!"

"Philosophically spoken, George," said his friend, "when I know that you delight in seeing Miss Beaumont lash indiscriminately around her; I think it is but fair you should patiently endure whatever sharp cuts fall to your share; particularly, as I

am not quite sure that the pain she inflicts is not compensated by a bright flash from her eye!"

George turned away with a laugh, and the party soon after separated.

CHAPTER III.

The eril passions of his youth had made Him value less who loved—than what obeyed.

BYRON.

A glance from thy soul-searching eye
Can raise with hope, depress with fear;
Yet I conceal my love, and why?
I would not force a painful tear.

BYRON.

"CHARLES," said Mrs. Hamilton to her son, a fine young man about five-and-twen-J, as he was leaving the breakfast-room as morning, "Charles, you dine at home day, I suppose?" go home with him; but why do you ask?"

- "Because, my dear, Miss Delmar comes to-day, and I wish you to meet her."
- "Who is Miss Delmar, in the name of wonder?"
- "Surely, Charles," said his sister Sophia, who was several years his junior, "surely you have heard me speak of her, the daughter of Lord Fitz Eustace, and a sweet pretty girl, I assure you."
- "With a sweet pretty fortune, which is as good as a pretty face, Charles," said Mr. Hamilton, looking up from his newspaper. "Thirty thousand pounds, if she have a sixpence, and as, you know, you must look for a fortune, now is the time for action. Wealth and beauty are rarely combined—"
- "Why, that is a consideration," said Charles. "What time do you dine, mother?"
 - "Six, my dear."
 - "And will any body else be here?"

"Not unless her brother, who brings her down, stays the night."

"Very well, then, I shall be at home," said the young man, as he closed the door.

Before introducing Maria Delmar to our readers, a few minutes may not be deemed ill spent in arresting the course of our story to review the family she is for a time to be domesticated with. Mr. Hamilton was descended collaterally from an ancient noble house, and, having been an only son, had inherited a large property from his father; who, being a man of abstemious habits, had hoarded that gold which his son afterwards scattered with so profuse a hand. How often do we see that, in avoiding and condemning one extreme, we insensibly fall into the opposite one! Thus, Mr. Hamilton had not come into possession of his property many years before such inroads were made in it that he was compelled to give up his London establishment, and live wholly in the country; where his

connection with the county nobility compelled him to live in a style which swallowed up the whole of his yearly income. His lady was scarcely more provident than himself: therefore his principal solicitude with regard to his children, of whom he had four, was that they should marry well; by which, be it understood, he meant them to be allied to those possessed of wealth, well knowing he had very little to give them. It was now his darling wish that his eldest son, Charles, should marry Miss Delmar, with whose father he had been well acquainted, both in early life, and since Lord Fitz Eustace's return to England: and he hoped that, in the present visit of the young girl, the seeds of an attachment might be sown, which would terminate. in due time, in marriage.

Charles Hamilton, who was heir to an carldom in right of his mother, whose uncle, having no near male relation, had ever considered his grand-nephew as the inheri-

tor of the empty title of Earl of Glenartney (though of broad lands or golden stores he had little to bequeath); had been from his infancy the idol of his family, whose every thought was for him. Charles's will was almost sacred; and parents, sisters, and servants, had indulged him, until he scarcely knew how to control his wishes. Naturally talented, but indolent, he never applied himself to any profession; leading an easy, useless life, at times at home, but more frequently, since coming of age, in the south of Europe, where luxury in the highest degree, if such be the end in view, is procurable. Possessed of fifteen thousand pounds, left to him by an uncle, the income of which placed every thing he desired at his command, he lived still, as he had done from his birth, only for himself; yet his manners were so refined that his selfish, overbearing, temper was only particularly visible at home, where he could behave as he chose with impunity, from the blind partiality of his friends, with whom he was now passing some time, intending in the spring again to repair to the continent

About three o'clock the sound of wheels aroused the attention of Mrs. Hamilton and her daughters—a bustle in the entrance succeeded; and, in a few minutes Maria Delmar entered, whom we will take the present opportunity of describing. height she was commanding, in figure elegant, while her face, without possessing any particular beauty, charmed from the air of suavity and intelligence which beamed in her soft black eye; and the smile which was constantly playing round her mouth gave an expression of sweetness to the whole which made ample amends for the absence of great regularity. Such was the appearance of the young lady, as she gracefully received the congratulations of her friends on her safe arrival.

"But your brother, my dear Miss Delmar," said Mrs. Hamilton, "will he not favour us with his company for one night, or at least to dinner? I hope he does not think of going directly?"

"My brother, Madam," said Maria, "desired me to make his excuses for not paying his respects to you, but being anxious to travel twenty miles farther to-night, he begs you will permit him to postpone his visit until his return from the North."

"But he will take some refreshment," urged the good lady, ringing the bell as she spoke.

"Indeed, I fear," returned Miss Delmar, "your solicitude will be useless, he is so pressed for time."

"Warncliff," said Mrs. Hamilton to the servant who now answered her summons, "request Mr. Delmar to walk in, and take some slight refreshment." The man hastened to obey her, but as he reached the hall door for that purpose, his eye caught sight of young Delmar's phaeton as it whirled towards the lodge, and he retraced his steps

in order to inform his mistress of the ill success of his mission.

"My brother is always so decided," said Maria, "that I am sure he would not have altered his plan willingly, had he even been made aware of your kind wish to detain him. He is so anxious to see his friend at the Castle, that he does not like delaying his journey more than he can possibly avoid."

"Where is he going?" enquired Sophia.

"To Heron Castle, somewhere near the Cumberland Lakes. Sir George was my brother's friend at college, and is lately come to his title."

"Lord Fitz Eustace, is very good to spare you to us so long, my dear," said Mrs. Hamilton, "as he is to be alone all the summer."

"Oh!" returned her guest smiling, "Papa has been so long unaccustomed to a family that, although I am convinced he is very fond of us both, yet, provided we are out of mischief, I do not think he objects much to our being away in the summer; and I and Mortimer cannot endure the seclusion of his lrish estates."

"They must doubtless be unpleasant for such gay young people as you, my dear," returned Mrs. Hamilton, "and since you have given us the pleasure of your company, we must endeavour to make your time pass as agreeably as possible. Perhaps you will like to take a little walk before you change your travelling dress. Sophia, my dear, fetch my garden shawl."

The party were soon ready, and we will avail ourselves of their absence to apprise our readers that Maria Delmar and her brother were the only children of Lord Fitz Eustace. Of his offspring he was proud, rather than fond, as the period during which paternal tenderness is most engendered, namely that of childhood, was spent by the noble Lord abroad, where a lucrative employment detained him. During that time, he had married a Creole, who had died in giving birth to his daughter, who together

with Mortimer, had been placed under the care of judicious friends in England at a very early age; where they had received educations befitting their stations. Thus, when Lord Fitz Eustace returned home, a few years previous to the time of which we speak, he found his son on the verge of manhood, and his daughter like a delicate flower just revealing its perfections; ready to come forth into a gay world, prepared to take flight from the arms of those who had fostered their childhood. Never having fulfilled the duties of a parent, and being moreover of that disposition which never values anything except for the benefit accruing to itself, he cared more for the consideration which the attention or admiration they excited conferred upon him than for their affection. He gloried in being pointed out us the father of the handsome, recherché Mortimer Delmar, or the accomplished, fascinating Maria. He liked his children to shine as stars in the fashionable world,

because their lustre was shed upon him. Placed by fortune in a situation to disregard the attainment of wealth in forming marriages for his family, he looked to their being allied to some of the most noble houses: for he recollected that his grandfather, for whom the title was created, had been of very low origin, and, as his own wife had been a Creole of no rank, he depended upon his children forming high connections. he permitted the young people to enjoy themselves to whatever extent they pleased, never restraining their expenditure, but frequently impressing upon their minds his wish they should marry according to their rank. Fortunately the early guardians of the Delmars had instilled such principles into their minds as enabled them to cope with their father's unrestrained indulgence; and their conduct had ever been marked by that propriety, and correct judgment, which so truly characterises the great and noble mind. They had each received the most

expensive and at the same time the best of instruction, and due advantage had been reaped by them, as they were both highly accomplished; and the following pages will determine whether their characters were equally benefitted with their minds.

Charles Hamilton made his appearance towards the dinner hour, and was introduced to Maria, to whom he paid that delicate attention which, as his Father's guest, she demanded, and he, as a gentlemanly man, knew so well how to offer; and the graceful girl in a few days was completely at home at Merton Hall. The house was continually full of company, and Maria found that she had only exchanged the brilliancy of a London life for the activity of a country one. Daily parties of pleasure of one sort or another were formed; evening amusements succeeded, and a whirl of excitement prevailed here, though of a different complexion from that she had left in the metropolis.

Among the frequent visiters at the hall. were several officers of a dragoon regiment, then stationed at Nottingham; and, of these, one was distinguished for the elegance of his manners, but habitual, quiet, and silent demeanor. He was the only child of a lady. who had lost her husband by the chance of war, when her boy was but a few months old. An officer's widow has rarely much to depend on, and, as captain Sinclair had married from affection alone, small was the ettlement he was able to make for his wife, whom his death reduced to an income of two hundred a year, which her pension increased very little. Her little Frederic, therefore, passed his early years in an obscure village in Wales, whence he was removed to a good school near London, by a paternal uncle, at seven years of age; and be finished his education at Sandhurst, whence he obtained his commission, and the proud, the fond, but nearly heart-broken mother, saw her hope, her best blessing,

her noble boy, embark on that treacherous element which has consummated the misery of so many. With what agony did she not press her darling child to her bosom, before he departed from the land of his birth to combat the numberless dangers of an Indian residence; where the horrors of war are augmented by the unwholesome climate, which together spare so few to gladden the eyes and hearts of their anxious friends, by a happy, though a distant, return! Mrs. Sinclair, however, was more fortunate, for ten years restored her beloved Frederic to his home, and, though his bloom had been replaced by the sallow hue communicated by hardship and illness, the joyous parent knew the value, the blessing, of his restoration, and received the mercy in joy and thankfulness. Bath, in a few months, renovated young Sinclair, and enabled him to resume his duties, and he had been again a twelvemonth with his regiment, when Maria Delmar's visit at the hall took

place, and she had not been there many days when captain Sinclair dined at Mr. Hamilton's, with a large party. Maria's peculiar elegance was not lost upon the young soldier, who, however, had very little opportunity of conversing with her during the evening, but a pleasing impression was left on his mind, which time, that universal destroyer, was not ever able to remove; and the following day he called at the hall, hoping again to see the young visiter. He congratulated himself upon being admitted, and stepped quickly after the servant, as he marshalled the way to the drawing-room; but his curiosity was soon disappointed, by a casual remark of the lady of the mansion, who regretted her son was not at home, as he had called, adding, that he was out, riding with his sister and Miss Delmar

"No hopes, then," thought Frederic, "of seeing her to-day:" however, he enquired which way they were gone, and shortly

took leave, urging, as an excuse for so short a visit, his intention of going to seek his friend Hamilton; his ride, however, was useless, and, after galloping up one road, and down another, for an hour, he was obliged to conclude they had gone another way, and he returned to the barracks, half angry with himself for having gone on such a wild-goose chase.

Some days passed, the slight impression made by the appearance of Maria faded from the young officer's mind, and he almost forgot she had ever created a feeling of interest in him; when he was again invited to a ball at Mr. Hamilton's.

Meantime, Charles had been constantly in the habit of making one of the parties of amusement in which Maria was included; but no advance had been made in the sentiments of either, they were constantly together, but there was no sympathy between them. Mr. Hamilton watched his son, and Charles, feeling he did so, was more distant

than usual, before his father; thus, by his solicitude, he threatened to frustrate his object. Charles cared little about money, neither was he in any haste to cumber himself with a wife; for he knew he would no longer be able to consult his own convenience in the degree he wished, were he married. Self was his primary consideration, and he loved number one far too well to yield willingly to his father's desire.

One evening that they were sitting together over their wine, after the ladies had quitted the room, Mr. Hamilton said, "Well, Charles, how do you like Miss Delmar?"

- "Not particularly, Sir," replied his son, "though she is a pleasant girl."
- "Extremely so, I think, Charles; easy and unaffected!"
 - "Yes," he replied, coolly sipping his wine.
- "You seem very indifferent—I thought, by this time, you would have made some impression upon her."
 - "You are too hasty, sir: give me time,

and I may work my way, though I do not think she will assimilate with me."

- "Pooh! it only requires a little pains, and a girl is sure to like a man who is attentive to her."
- "Not in Miss Delmar's case, sir; but still, give me the time until she leaves us, and I shall see if I can act as you wish."
- "Well, Charles, several months is a long time to think about falling in love, but I will consent to it if you wish to go to work so very tardily; only remember, such opportunities do not occur every day." They both rose, as he said these words, and followed the ladies to the drawing-room, Charles satisfied that he had silenced his father for a time, and Mr. Hamilton hoping his son would be induced to comply with his plan for his advantage.

A few days subsequent to this conversation, a ball was to take place at the hall, where all the county nobility and families of distinction were expected to be present,

ation which he had received, again his respects to the family, and found young people just going out to the ry ground near the house, and was prevailed on to accompany them. lou are doubtless a good marksman, air," said young Hamilton, "here, my bow, and let us see your skill." Excuse me," he replied, "I hardly ever led a bow, and fear I should stand a chance of hitting the target." Never handled a bow!" said Maria Del-"then I am sure it is quite time you ld learn, when archery parties are so faable an amusement, too. Come, Captain ur, I will give you your first lesson." wain and he nonridicule of his companions, at his awkwardness, in good part for some time, he succeeded in standing in the proper position; and after a few attempts they were surprised at his rapid improvement.

- "Really, I shall be quite proud of my pupil soon," said Maria, as the bows were being replaced in their cases, "you must persevere in practising, and I should not despair of your bearing off the prize at the approaching meeting."
- "You must come here on our practising days, Sinclair," said Charles, "and you will soon find yourself quite au fait. The meeting and ball will be very gay things, I assure you."
- "So I hear,—I intended to be there, though not as a candidate for fame. However, as you have been so kind, Miss Delmar, as to undertake my tuition, and to praise my poor efforts, I must endeavour to do credit to your instructions. When is the party fixed for?"

"Tuesday fortnight," answered Charles, "and you will not have too much time to attain perfection if you come every day. We shall practise at twelve o'clock, whenever it be fine."

"I cannot promise myself the pleasure every day, but, as often as my duties will allow of my absence, I will not fail to come. I will not hope I may win the prize, since you are all my competitors, but I may venture a wish not to discredit my teacher."

They now returned to the house, and young Sinclair was soon on his way back to Nottingham; where his first thought was where he could furnish himself conformably to his newly assumed character of an "archer good." As he contemplated his accoutrements when they were brought home, he could not help smiling at his sudden prepossession in favour of a sport for which he had hitherto expressed a decided aversion. "How my good mother

would laugh," thought he, "to see her 'Soldier lad' equipped en Cupidon. Never mind, good lady, there are more wonders than you dream of in your philosophy."

He joined the young Hamiltons once more before the ball, where he had the pleasure of obtaining Maria as a partner more than once; her affability, her refinement, added to her prepossessing appearance, insensibly attached him to her; and we must not be surprised if her pleasing form haunted the dreams of the bold Dragoon during his repose after this party. The reader must not understand that such was actually the case, since we did not interrogate the young soldier on the subject; but his impatience at being detained all the next day at Nottingham would induce us to believe that the feeling in favour of the young Maria was no way diminished by the character she held; for who will deny the additional gratification derived in the attainment of an art from its being imparted

by one we love? In the course of the following fortnight, he felt an augmented delight in being with her, for which he himself could not account, for she invariably bestowed less commendation upon endeavours than any one clse; it is true, he frequently made mistakes on purpose that he might be set right by her, and perhaps she might think he did not do so well as he ought; therefore, the last time or two that occurred for practice, not only Maria, but his other young friends, were surprised at his proficiency, and when they parted, promising to meet the next day at the place of competition, Maria said "Remember, Captain Sinclair, I expect you will put out the bull's eye to-morrow, so call up all your energy."

"I fear you will be disappointed, Miss Delmar, but as every one of course will have a chance, I may indulge a hope of success; though I think your shafts are likely to prove more fortunate than mine."

His looks at the moment told more than perhaps he intended, or Maria liked, for she blushed, and, turning, took the arm of one of the Miss Hamiltons, saying "Come, Jane, let us go to the conservatory for the flowers for our hair," and in a few minutes was at some distance.

The following day, the Hamilton party were all ready at an early hour to proceed to the place of amusement, which it was necessary to reach some time before the shooting began, on account of securing favourable places. Mrs. Hamilton, with Maria and her daughters, and some other ladies, occupied three open carriages; while Charles, and several young men who were staying in the house, accompanied them on horseback, and gaily conversed with one or other of their fair friends, as they rode beside the conveyances. Charles, however, had such an aversion to be too soon that he persuaded his mother not to go until a hour after the time she had fixed; thus the first person Maria saw on being assisted from the Britscha by Charles, was Frederic Sinclair; who eagerly informed them that they must make haste, or they would fail in their object of securing seats, as a great deal of company had already arrived. The scene was one of extreme beauty, for the sun shone brightly on numbers of young and gaily dressed women, while gorgeous flags and many coloured pennons fluttered in the breeze, from the top of the temporary buildings.

The candidates having drawn lots for precedence, the sport commenced, and several ladies shot, but wide of the mark, and, ere it came to Maria Delmar's turn, the ground round the Target was charged with ering shafts. As she advanced, every eye was upon her, and many a secret wish was formed that so elegant a girl should win the silver arrow, which was suspended high above the mark. On one side of her stood Charles Hamilton, ready to furnish her with

...mc. As she drew her bow, sl eves round the expecting circle, a rose to her cheek, which, how caused a momentary embarrassme her first arrow flew harmlessly ove get. The second pierced the ou and the third, aimed with peculi touching the verge of the bull's a retired amidst a loud murmur of a Among those who succeeded her, and young Sinclair only approached skill, and the prize was awarded to a thunder of congratulation. Mo one ready hand was extended to from its elevated situation, but Fr. was the successful one, and he bor triumph to her, who, in his eyes wa worthy of it --

to the flame which occupied his heart, and to give him a hope that their frequent collision had not been unproductive of a sentiment of kindness towards himself being implanted in her breast. That smile made him dead to the charms of every one around him, and he hovered near her until the time of separation for dinner, which the Hamiltons were to take at a friend's house, previous to preparing for the ball.

As the ardent lover entered the brilliant assembly, he saw Charles in the act of leading the fair victor to her place in the quadrille, and, as his eye followed her graceful movements, he thought he had never seen so well dressed or so pleasing a creature. To his disappointment he found she was already engaged the next three sets, and she positively declined waltzing; he therefore secured her for a partner as soon as possible, and resolutely determined not to dance at all until her hand was at liberty. More than one friend offered him a partner,

but he declined, and only joined the other young men who were either too idle to dance, or, like himself, too much vexed by not obtaining the lady they desired. He however, had the satisfaction, after going through the dance for which she had accepted him, of conducting her to the supper room, and of sitting next to her, which entirely restored his spirits; how shortly, alas! to sustain a severe check.

Frederic had, more than once, during his visits at Merton hall, fancied that Charles Hamilton had a design upon the hand of Maria, but his conduct was so equivocal that he had felt no uneasiness from his competition. This night, however, was destined to be one of annoyance to him, for, whilst speaking to a gossipping old lady, with whom he was only slightly acquainted, she said, "That is a fine young man whom Miss Delmar is to marry. Are you intimate with him?"

"Do you mean Charles Hamilton?" he

enquired, in no small astonishment at so abrupt a declaration. "Yes, I know a little of him, but was not aware of the circumstance you mention."

"Indeed!" returned the old lady, "I thought it was a settled thing—a good match for him as to money, and one, I should think, pleasing to the families of each."

"Do you think so?" was all the answer she received to her information.

"Yes," continued his tormentor, "I hear that he is heir to an Earldom, and of an old family, which I have always understood are the two great things Lord Fitz Eustace looks for in her marriage."

"I did not know it," answered Sinclair, as he turned away and walked across the room to where Maria and her friends stood waiting for Charles, who was gone to find the carriage.

"I suppose you are not going yet, Captain Sinclair," said Mrs. Hamilton, "or I should offer you a seat on the box of the carriage."

"I am only waiting to see you safe," replied he, "and am infinitely indebted to you, but, having the promise of a seat in a friend's cab, I will resign my place to some less fortunate person." He then led Maria down stairs, who said, "Mrs. Hamilton has promised to give an archery party herself, Captain Sinclair, therefore, I suppose you will come to our ground as usual, or is your ardour damped to day?"

"I fear it is, Miss Delmar; however, I shall do myself the honor of calling at the Hall, to enquire how you are after your fatigues."

"Well, I dare say you will hear then more about this party than I can tell you; but I hope you will not give up archery, for I think you will become quite a proficient."

"You are pleased to be complimentary," said he, as he handed her in; then, bowing to Mrs. Hamilton, he hastened home without waiting for friend or conveyance.

The words of his communicative friend had

pierced him to the quick, for in the very moment of hope and expectation, when he telt almost assured he was loved, when her smile had power to raise him to happiness, or her frown to sink him into despair, he had been assured of her projected union with a man whose attractions he was constrained to own were far superior to his own, as far as the riches of this world went.

The unhappy Frederick, as he turned and tossed on his bed, for the first time in his life cursed his situation; he now coveted those empty worldly considerations which are so frequently a burthen to their owners.

Hitherto he had been contented with his wealth, small as it might be; but now he thought, for the first time, of the disparity of his rank and expectations, compared with those of the possessor of his best affections. In the vortex of passion, and the indulgence of the pleasing dream, he had not remembered he was poor and untitled. "Fool, blind fool!" he ejaculated, "not to know

that the aristocratic Lord Fitz Eustace w never look upon you, but as a worm ben his foot. Yes, galling as is the conviction must, in justice and prudence, abandon chace in which I have indulged for s weeks; again, seek pleasure, but not ha ness, in the society of others." He had quite determined on adopting this meas when it occurred to him that what he heard might be scandal, that hydra! w raises its terrific form every where, but t particularly in the fertile hot-bed of a cou town. This re-created a hope in his m , a feeble one I fear, thought he, but at events I will again visit the Hall, and find my information too true, I can w draw." With this plan still fresh upor mind, which felt soothed by hope, he droj into forgetfulness; and remembered not the fly, which returns again to taste fron jar of sweets, after having detected the ger of his position on the brink, clogs wings before he is aware, and falls a vi

to his imprudence. Leaving him in the enjoyment of a temporary oblivion of his anxiety, we must return to Heron Castle, for whose inmates, we trust, a slight interest has already been created.

CHAPTER IV.

Contemn the little pride of giving pain,
Nor think that conquest justifies disdain;
Short is the period of insulting power;
Offended Cupid finds his vengeful hour,
Soon will resume the empire which he gave,
And soon the tyrant shall become the slave.

LORD LYTTLETON.

MARY, having once imbibed the idea that the least interest was awakened in the minds of Mortimer and Beatrice for each other, let no opportunity escape of tormenting her cousin. Beatrice's anxiety to avoid her malicious sallies upon Mortimer's slightest increase of attention towards her, coupled with the awkwardness inherent on the conviction of being the object of his

brierence, induced her to shun him as much as possible, greatly to his disappointment, for he found a daily augmentation of pleasure in her society. If he asked her to walk, she had always something to detain her in the house, or if he proposed a ride, George had engaged her to accompany him in the pony chair; and the lively Mary was Mortimer's only resource. Her manner, however, when they were together, was marked by the same courtesy as at the first part of his visit, and Mortimer felt indignant at her coolness: he endeavoured by renewed efforts to gain her favour, but a trivial circumstance caused him to alter his manner. She had excused herself one morning from driving with him when his phaeton came to the door, upon which he had ordered it back to the stable, and joined the party in a walk.

"I fear I have deprived you of your drive, Mr. Delmar," said Beatrice, as he walked gravely beside her. "You had much better have gone without me."

"That would, perhaps, have pleased you best, Miss Heron, but as I wish to found my happiness on that of others, I cannot like solitary rides."

Beatrice coloured deeply, but remained silent, and for some distance George engaged Mortimer's attention by pointing out spots for several meditated improvements.

- "What beautiful roses!" exclaimed Mary, as they approached a bush covered with the last blossoms of the season."

 "Have you a knife, Beatrice? I am sure my aunt would like some of these." Beatrice immediately gathered several, and George said, "Give me one, Beatrice, there are plenty besides for my mother."
- "You look as if you would like a bouquet, Mr. Delmar," said Mary; "pray bestow a rose-bud upon him, cousin."
- "Perhaps Miss Heron thinks them too choice for me," said he coldly.

withdraw him. He naturally thought Beatrice wished to discourage his advances, and, easily repulsed, and sensitively alive to a fear of being chargeable with unwelcome intrusion, he resolved he would not seek her affections. "Why should I endeavour to gain her love?" said he mentally, "she is as cold and heartless as her cousin is the contrary; she freezes my hopes and repulses all my advances. Still I love her too much to do anything she dislikes; therefore she shall be satisfied. I will conquer my feelings and shew her I can at least act as she appears to wish, though it may cost me much."

During the succeeding days, he combatted his feelings strongly, and succeeded, at the expense of his happiness, in comporting himself conformably to his intentions; but his gaiety was sensibly diminished. He now saw little of Beatrice, for, what with his daily sports and his monopoly by Mary when in doors, his time was fully occupied.

The giddy girl constantly carried him off, notwithstanding George's annoyance, who, amiable as he might be, was not proof against her coquetry. Frequently, as she was pursuing her system of tormenting him by rattling on to Mortimer's amusement, George would sit or stand in the embrasure of one of the castle windows. and, while he seemed occupied with his book, would indulge his newly aroused jealousy, which his friend either did not or would not see, caring little for Mary beyond the hour's amusement conveyed by her volatility; which for the time made him forget his vexation at what he considered Beatrice's dislike. Delmar was beginning to think of his departure, for he felt he could not long endure the constraint to which he was obliged to subject himself; and had even hinted such being his intention to Sir George, who, however, would not hear of it. The following day his friend proposed to go pheasant shooting, which Mortimer willingly acceded to, and order was issued to one of the game-ke to be in readiness early.

The day previous had been sper Mortimer in wandering about the waccompanied by Beatrice's Italian, hound, which had taken a great to him; and his solitary ramble hat tended to raise his spirits.

George had scarcely spoken to Ma day, for he was quite offended with inconstancy; Beatrice was grieved unhappy, for she felt the great erro had insensibly committed by allowin timidity so completely to overcome he to repel the advances of one for who could not disguise from herself she tained an attachment; therefore, who party met in the drawing room after da gloom hung over all, which the evours of Lady Heron were not suffic potent to dispel. She however en Mortimer to play with her at backgar

George took a book and threw himself into an easy chair, while his sister began to work. For a few moments after they were settled, Mary sat silently looking at this arrangement, and then said, "How delightfully industrious you all are—what can I do to follow so good an example?" No answer being returned, she remained thoughtfully watching the backgammon players some time, then walking across the room to George, and laying her hand lightly on his shoulder, said in a low voice, "Will you have any music, George?"

"Not to-night, thank you, Mary," replied he coldly, and still keeping his eyes fited on his book.

"Are you ill, George?" she enquired, smiling. He shook his head, and she continued, "Are you out of tune then? What, to answer! I must then administer my infallible remedy for the blue devils. Come, Beatrice, let us play our new duet, to rouse him."

"I cannot to-night, cousin, I am anxious to finish James Houston's purse, as he comes to-morrow; besides, I have a very bad head-ache."

"Cannot you persuade Beatrice to comply, Mr. Delmar?" said Mary, turning to him.

"I fear not, Miss Beaumont, I cannot hope Miss Heron will yield to my solicitation what she has refused to you, and I should be averse to request any thing unpleasant to herself." As he spoke, his eye met that of Beatrice, and she replied, with a smile, "I knew, Mary, Mr. Delmar had too much politeness to press me to do any thing he saw was disagreeable."

Mortimer only bowed, and continued his game, but he was aware of a slight thrill of pleasure, as he heard her commendation, though it annihilated his hopes of gaining her affection; for he judged that she referred to his altered manner towards her. The ardent sparks of love were still lying

dormant in his breast, and waited only the slightest breath of encouragement to fan them into a flame; but they were now in danger of extinction from want of nurture, as Mortimer had firmly resolved he would triumph over himself.

Mary, not finding any one to attend to her instrument, at which she had placed herself, rose, and again, approaching her cousin, said, "Come, George, if you are determined not to be amused, read to me—I am not so difficult."

"So it appears," replied he, bitterly, "but I can assure you, Mary, that you shall see that I am not more difficult than yourself; yet I would not be like you in every thing, for a great deal."

"Very likely not, George, you seem to have discovered something in me which you dislike, for you never say a word to me now."

[&]quot;Because I thought you liked me best at a distance."

"So I do, when you are so cross, George, I do not know who would prefer to have you near them in such a temper. Do you know what is the matter with him, Beatrice?"

"Oh no!" said George, quickly, "I have nothing the matter with me, but a bad pain in my head, and shall go to bed, as that is the only place I can be at peace." So saying, he threw down his book, and left the room. Mary immediately hastened after him, to unravel the cause of his displeasure; and, having come up to him just as he reached his room door, enquired anxiously whether she had offended him.

"No, it is not worth my while to be offended," he said, angrily. "Why do you torment me so, Mary?"

"Because, dear George, I cannot endure your displeasure, which I am sure I have excited, or you would not look at me as you do, I cannot believe your head-ache is the sole cause of your gloomy looks." "Nonsense," said he, entering his room and closing the door, adding, as he did so, "You do not care for my gloomy looks. I am not to be deceived by your infernal coquetry."

For an instant Mary stood aghast, her cousin's conduct was instantly explained. and sorrow for her thoughtless levity filled her eyes with scalding tears; she retreated hastily, however, and, resting her head on her hand as she sat at her toilet-table, recalled to her mind every circumstance of which George could complain, and gave way to a passionate flood of tears. That her cousin should be displeased was painful, but that he should have applied such an epithet to her, deeply wounded the heart which had erred more from thoughtlessness than intention. She condemned herself much for having permitted herself to indulge her taste for tormenting him; she remembered how often, lately, she had triumphed when she saw his clouded brow.

"What a foolish fellow he is!" she though while the tears trickled fast at the recolle tion of his severity the last week. "He very foolish to be jealous, when he know fondly I love him. Mr. Delmar, thougheasant, is but as chaff before the win in my opinion, compared with him. A dear Beatrice," she said, mournfully, as he cousin entered, "I have found out where the desired was so strange to-day."

"Have you, indeed," replied she mildl "then I hope, dear Mary, you will repa your error."

"Do you then know the reason?"

"It has been apparent to me sometime replied Beatrice, "and I wonder you d not observe it, for I think it must have been almost impossible to avoid seeing George discomfort."

"Has my aunt, then, spoken of my b haviour, to you?"

"Yes, dearest Mary, and it was her intention to have pointed out your fault

you to-morrow. She deferred it so long because she hoped you would detect your folly. Surely you have perceived how much Mr. Delmar has shunned you last week, evidently in consequence of George's annovance."

"Say, rather, in consequence of your coldness, Beatrice," said Mary, her eyes sparkling through her tears, like a bright sun-beam darting from behind a cloud, which is still discharging its store on the fair face of nature.

"Spare your raillery, Mary," replied Beatrice, gravely, "the past cannot be recalled, and it must now be our care to look to the future. How differently should we both behave now, could we have foreseen what pain our mistaken conduct would have occasioned!"

"What shall I do," said Mary, relapsing into her grief, "what shall I do to make my peace with dear George! He is going out so early to-morrow that I shall not see

him until the evening, and then James Houston will be here. Oh! how unkind he is to be so jealous! I have a great mind to punish him by not speaking to him at all,—he would soon lower his tone."

"Let me entreat you not to give such a thought a moment's consideration, Mary, it will only tend to increase his anger. George is not easily offended, but if once he forms an opinion of any one, time is necessary to eradicate its effects."

"I know his character full as well as you do, Beatrice," returned her cousin, rather pettishly, "and I shall judge how to treat him."

"You must act as you please, certainly, Mary, but I advise you not to do anything to irritate him farther."

Mary made no reply, but continued to indulge her tears some time longer, before she sought her pillow. Beatrice, as she thought over the events of the last few weeks, endeavoured to persuade herself that

she had been deceived by Mortimer's attention, and that, in reality, he had not entertained an affection for her; but conscience seemed to cry out, when she resolved to master the sentiments she had permitted to take root in her heart, and to exclaim loudly against her assertions of his indifference; and the suppressed sobs of her cousin had, for some time, been replaced by the soft breathings of slumber, ere she could compose herself sufficiently to follow her example.

CHAPTER V.

And ne'er did Grecian chisel trace A nymph, a Naiad, or a grace, Of finer form, or lovelier face!

WALTER SCOTT.

THE morning broke as fine as a sportsman could desire, and George and Mortimer issued from beneath the portal of the Castle, at an early hour. Each was equipped in a fustian shooting coat, from the capacious pockets of which peeped the mouths of their powder horns. A shot belt depended from their shoulders, and a light cap was placed on one side of their heads. They advanced to the centre of the lawn, and, after sweeping the skirt of the wood

with their eyes, Sir George raised a silver whistle to his lips, and its tones had scarcely ceased to vibrate on the ear, when a keeper was seen hastening from among the trees, preceded by several dogs, which ran bounding to answer their master's voice. The young men shouldered their fowling pieces, and, turning down a path, were soon lost sight of among the dark foliage of the pine trees, with which the park was principally wooded.

Several subsequent hours were spent rapidly in pursuance of their amusement, for game was plentiful, their dogs well trained, their guns of Purdy's best, and their eyes and hands steady; thus, by twelve o'clock, the game bag was amply stored, and, having delivered the guns to the scrvant, they despatched him with them to the castle, and George, taking his friend's arm, walked slowly across a corn-field in an opposite direction. After strolling on for an hour, Mortimer threw himself on a

grassy bank, under the umbrageous branches of an oak, saying, "Come, George, sit you down, and let us chat. Why, man! you can walk for ever, are you not quite tired?"

- "Not particularly, but I have no objection to a little rest," returned George, placing himself beside his friend. "What, are you done up?"
- "No, but it is so hot, and you must recollect we have been upon our legs since six o'clock. How far may we be from the castle now?"
- "Some half dozen miles, I fancy," returned George, "but, really, I have been here so little that I am not very well acquainted with the localities. I think our road lies in that direction," pointing, as he spoke, towards the south-east.

"If that be the distance, George, the chances are that a comfortable shower bath will be our portion, for the clouds look very ominous, and I have heard several claps of distant thunder."

The day, which had commenced so auspiciously, had changed for the worse, the sky was now charged by heavy, lurid masses of vapour; and the wind, which at one moment was so still that it scarcely stirred a leaf, at another whistled mournfully among the branches, over the heads of the young men; yet, as soon as the breeze had swept by, the oppression in the atmosphere seemed twofold increased.

"By Jove! Mortimer," said George, starting to his feet as a vivid flash of lightning burst from the portentous cloud, and for an instant seemed to quiver round the tree beneath which they reposed, "I shall be off—trees are not desirable shelter in a storm such as this is likely to be. Are you going to stay here?" he continued, seeing Mortimer did not immediately follow his example.

"I think not, George, I am not quite tired of life yet," replied he, also rising. "I was contemplating the majesty with which that cloud is rolling towards us. Does it not remind you of the uncontrolled passions of the human breast?"

"At this moment I do not perceive the similitude," returned George, smiling, as they left their dangerous position. "Perhaps you will pity my dullness, and explain the resemblance."

"Why, I argue thus," rejoined Delmar, "that thunder cloud was probably, at its formation, a light fleecy vapour, and, like the mind in childhood, was innocuous. As they each advance in age, however, angry passions in the one, and electricity in the other, take place of original purity, and they proceed on their course, increasing in magnitude, strength, and wickedness, until they occasion their own destruction, and that of every object connected with them."

"Even so, my dear philosopher," returned George, "I did not know you had a taste for moralising."

"It is not inherent, George-considera-

tion on the vanity of projected happiness is the origin of it in me, if I possess any."

"Vanity of a fiddle-stick, Mortimer! which is quite as probable as the vanity of your happiness. Why, I should like to know what young fellow has more reason to be happy than yourself; every thing seems within your grasp; you are exorbitant in your expectations, my friend."

"And yet, George, one thing alone is wanting to make me happy."

"Be assured that one is better not in your possession; do you not know that the most coveted object loses half its value in being attained?"

"So we are told," returned Mortimer, "but all are unwilling to believe it."

"Well! my present wish," said George, as he shook his coat, on which several heavy drops of rain now fell, "is to find some sort of shelter, for we shall be drenched soon. I see the spire of a church behind those trees, so there must be a cottage near. Come on, Delmar."

The storm was now rapidly advancing, the lightning blazed, and the thunder pealed continually, while the rain descended in torrents, as they hastily traversed a field. and turned the corner of a high hedge, where they suddenly came in sight of a small neat dwelling, standing within a short distance of a narrow road. It was partially concealed by the foliage of several chesnut trees, and the rustic entrance was covered by clematis and the scarlet creeper, which climbed up the front of the building, and looked in at every casement. friends hesitated not to push aside the wicket, and to enter the beautifully kept flower garden; they paused not, however, to observe its neatness, but hastened to the entrance, where George applied loudly for admission.

"You make as much noise, George," said Mortimer, "as if you were lord of the mansion; now, I doubt the propriety of intruding here at all." "There is no reason to solicit shelter if you be either fire or water proof," returned George laughing; "but as I am flesh and blood, I mean to avail myself of that refuge which chance has thrown in my way." So saying, he addressed the aged female who now opened the door, and requested permission to remain half an hour while the storm lasted.

He had scarcely made his demand, or the woman had time to pronounce the word "Surely," ere a door to the right opened and an old man appeared, who was no sooner informed of the state of the case than he said, as he threw the door wide open, "Come in, come in, gentlemen. Shelter from the rain! to be sure. Heartless must he be who could refuse it at an awful moment like this." Upon this they entered the little sitting-room, where their host introduced them to his grand-daughter, a lovely girl apparently about seventeen.

To a cast of features purely Grecian was

united in her countenance all that could dazzle and delight. Her eye was of that dark, that holy, blue, which when fringed by the lash which may be said to sweep the cheek, almost deepens to a black; and her skin was so delicate and transparent that the clear blue vein might be distinctly seen beneath. In figure, she was so light, so fragile, that, in looking at her, one was reminded of a tender flower, which displays its beauties in the early sunbeams, but which droops and fades beneath the chill evening blast.

For an instant, as the strangers entered, her cheek was suffused by a roseate hue, which might have rivalled the earliest blush of Aurora; but, when Mortimer's gaze of admiration met her sight, it deepened to a crimson, and she turned hastily away to place the old man's chair by the fire. He might have numbered nearly seventy winters, for the few hairs which were scattered over his high and noble forehead, as well

happy, thrice happy do I think myself, for being placed by a merciful Creator in a station where I am exempt from some of the miseries to which my less fortunate fellow creatures are subject. Here, in the discharge of my duty and the society of my child, I hope to spend the remnant of my days, far from the troubles of the world!"

"You seem to think, sir," replied young Delmar, "that no pleasure exists save in seclusion; but were you conversant with society, you would own that it, too, had its attractions. Even in the course of the peaceful life you lead here, I dare say you have your anxieties?"

"Doubtless," returned his host; "but they are trifles compared with what others endure, and I am content with every thing around me. Are you able to say the same?"

"I fear not," replied Mortimer; "yet I could never be persuaded that the life of complete retirement is one of happiness.

The stream of existence may flow noiselessly away, and, like a flower of the field, we may droop and die in peace; but, in my opinion, life was given for enjoyment, and I should be tempted to take the evil with the good."

"Very natural, very natural," returned the old man, "youth, health, and inexperience are yours at present."

"Pray how far are we from Heron Castle?" interrupted George, who had been caressing a large spaniel which lay before the fire.

"Rather better than five miles by the fields," replied the rector, "which I suppose you will prefer, being the shortest. Is it at Sir George Horon's that you are staying, sir?"

"That is my name," answered the young baronet. "I and my friend, Mr. Delmar, left home on a shooting expedition this morning, and had sent our servant home with the dogs, when the storm burst,

and we hailed your cottage with pleasure."

"In which, let me assure you, I feel much satisfaction in entertaining you. is rare that any one, save those who seek spiritual or corporeal aid, come under my roof; and, since the rain seems likely to continue, I hope you will partake our meal, which must now be prepared. Ring, my love," continued he to the young lady, "and we will inquire the cause of the delay." George and Mortimer accepted the invitation, and the new friends were soon seated round the hospitable board of Mr. Vernon, for such was the name of their host. During the repast, they conversed cheerfully on various topics; George found that Mr. Vernon had been acquainted with his father, and that circumstance created an interest in the mind of each, which afforded a fertile subject for conversation. Mortimer meanwhile found much pleasure in the naiveté of the beautiful

Ellen. Innocent as the infant, which yet lies cradled in its mother's arms, and timid as a fawn, she spoke with an ease which is either the offspring of ignorance of worldly forms, or else of perfect acquaintance with the rules of society. With her the former was, of course, the reason, and, while engaged in talking with her, Mortimer forgot that he had ever felt an emotion of tenderness for Beatrice, or that, even an hour before, he had indulged his bitter reflections on the subject of her coldness. He forgot everything, in short, except the beautiful girl who spoke, and, when she rose and retired from the table. she seemed to carry with her everything that had caused the previous hour to pass so quickly; he, however, joined in the conversation between his friend and Mr. Vernon, for some time, when, the heavens being again clear, Sir George rose to depart. "You will permit me, I hope, Mr. $V_{
m emon}$," he said, " to have the pleasure of calling on you another day, since my father's friend must be mine also."

"You need scarcely request it, my young friend, since it is I who should feel gratified by the acquaintance; and your friend will also be welcome in my poor dwelling," added the good man, as he turned towards young Delmar, who felt no slight pleasure at thus having the prospect of again seeing the bewitching creature who had bewildered him with her transcendant loveliness. He had no opportunity of seeing her again however, before he left the house, as George, anxious to return home, immediately set off, and hurried the unwilling Mortimer away. After walking half a mile silence, George exclaimed "Well! Mortimer, what think you of our visit? apparently we have neither been displeased with it!"

"No," said Mortimer, "the refreshment was acceptable, and the old man hospitable."

"Add, also, that the grand-daughter was,

or rather is, beautiful," interrupted George, laughing.

"True, Heron, as beautiful as an angel. She is indeed

A flower not fit to bloom unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

"Yet, Delmar, she will probably bloom where nature placed her, the wife of some farmer, or poor curate, perhaps."

"Thrown away," answered Delmar, thoughtfully.

"Nay, Mortimer, happiness is all she should look for, and a poor, but beautiful, country girl is more likely to find it with such a person than if raised from her obscurity."

"I differ from you, George; such a beautiful being would ornament a throne, and find happiness everywhere with an innocent mind like hers."

"She is an enviable mortal, then," retuned the other; "but, whatever may be her attractions, she seems to have spread her nets well, since so wary a fellow as your are trapped in them."

"Me! George, me trapped? Can I no! admire a girl without being absolutely caught and caged? Nonsense, my heart is as free as it was before."

"Say you so? good Delmar, then salculate it is wounded in more partstan one."

"What the deuce do you know about my heart, Heron?" returned Mortimer, in a tone of annoyance, while the hot blood was apparent in his cheek, notwithstanding the darkness of his complexion. "I think you will have enough to do to keep your own quarry in view, without troubling your head about me."

"There is some truth in that," said George, changing his tone from gay to grave; "and I wish I may not be baffled in my giddy flight."

The conversation now turned upon other subjects, for neither was willing that the

other should observe his sentiments, yet they felt the secret of each breast had been metrated by the eye of friendship. An bour more brought them to the castle, where they found the domestic circle increased by a distant relation of Lady Heron. James Houston was the elder son of an eminent banker in London, and, being in his father's house, had obtained a few weeks' holiday. He had devoted this time to travelling among the lakes, and, being so near Heron Castle, had availed himself of the present opportunity of paying a long promised visit to Sir George. He was lively and good tempered, and Lady Heron hoped he would add much to the gaiety of the party during his stay; for she saw, with infinite pain, the constraint which pervaded the conduct of her children and their com-Danione

During the day, Beatrice and her cousin had been entirely silent on the previous evening's occurrence, but the meeting

between George and the latter, on assembling for dinner, plainly shewed that neither had forgotten it.

"I believe I was too harsh to you last night, Mary," said he in a low tone, holding out his hand to her, as they descended to the dining-room. "I hope you do not bear me any malice?"

"Oh! no," replied she, while her cheek flushed with pleasure. "Only remember not to be so severe in future, as I will not promise to forgive you so readily. Come," continued she gaily, "tell us where you have been during this terrible storm; that you have done the larder good service I already know, since Michael told us he had brought home nine brace of pheasants and three hares."

During dinner, the baronet recounted the day's adventure, and spoke of Mr. Vernon with pleasure, as a person whose friendship he should desire and value; mentioning also the surpassing loveliness

and elegance of his interesting granddaughter. Poor Beatrice felt her blood curdle as she heard Mortimer join with enthusiasm in praising her, and, when she laid her aching head on her pillow, she was obliged to confess that the pang she then felt was the first approach of the demon of jealousy. From an early age she had been accustomed by her mother to scritinise her daily actions, and she was therefore not long in detecting the feeling which had just taken root in her heart. Long after Mary had sunk into the arms of Morpheus, she permitted the tear of love, jalousy, and vexation, to moisten her eye: but when she reflected how useless it was to fret, how wrong to indulge such an evil passion, or feel angry with Mortimer for praising a person for whom he might not even be interested, she magnanimously resolved to overcome her feelings and keep ber love in subjection. How easy are our plans in theory! and alas! how very diffi-

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cult in practice! We forget, in the momen of formation, how rough and tortuous is the path of rectitude; we make no allowant for the tests our virtuous resolutions with have to endure, but often think that it practice we shall not meet with most obstacles than when making them in moment of tranquillity and repose. Best trice found the truth of this in the cours of the few following weeks: but we must not anticipate.

CHAPTER VI.

Derision sneers upon her birth,

And yields her scarce a name on earth.

BYRON.

Mortimer's admiration of Ellen Vernon would have attracted him again to Claybrook rectory, on the following day, but as he had no ostensible motive for presenting himself there, without George, who was otherwise engaged, he was obliged to content himself with the hope that he might induce his friend to call upon Mr. Vernon in a few days. He enjoyed a ride with Beatrice and lady Heron, when he found the former more easy and pleasant than he had done for some time, but he took no

advantage of the circumstance, for his thoughts were elsewhere, though his heart was not yet dead to its first impressions. No, he was not,

A mortal made
Of such quicksilver clay that in his breast
No permanent foundation can be laid.

He loved Beatrice deeply, but finding, or fancying, he found, no sympathy, he placed his admiration upon the nearest attractive object. Should that object return his affection, we would, by no means, say his love was not transferable; and the following pages will show whether his sentiments could be changed. He was enabled to pay his much-wished for visit to Claybrook, soon after: but they found the old man only at home, his grand-daughter being gone to the village school. This was a disappointment, but Mortimer consoled himself in the hope of her return, before George terminated his visit, and it happened fortunately, as he thought, for, just as they rose

to depart, Ellen tripped lightly up the little garden. A few minutes' longer stay, was, of course, necessary, and the incense, during that time, poured upon his rejected affections, conveyed such intoxicating pleasure as to chain him a willing captive at the altar of beauty. Again the image of Beatrice faded from his memory, as he contemplated the charms of Ellen; and it was with reluctance that he tore himself away and turned homewards with his friend.

Some days passed without any remarkable occurrence; Delmar found his way to Claybrook several times, deriving much pleasure from his acquaintance with both Mr. Vernon and Ellen; his spirits returned, and Beatrice saw, with what pain those only can tell, who have seen the heart of one they loved alienated from them, that Mortimer had bestowed those affections she so much coveted upon another.

George again became a prey to jealousy, from his cousin's flirtations with James

Houston, and, in consequence, they preserved a repulsive coldness towards each other; the former from pique, the latter from the expectation that her cousin would yield; but in this she was mistaken, since he was resolved not to give way again. Thus both were made uncomfortable, and George determined to leave home as soon as his friend's visit should be terminated. The heart of that friend was troubled by many contending emotions, which alternately gave him pain and pleasure. Captivated by Ellen, he yet felt the most acute pangs when he thought Beatrice favoured young Houston, whose attentions were obvious. To avoid suffering this, and unwilling also to be at all in her way, he was constantly out walking, or at the rectory, and he congratulated himself upon having mastered his feelings—but it was a false idea, he had only lulled them. One morning that he had been out shooting, he reserved a brace of pheasants to carry to

(laybrook, and after luncheon mounted his horse, and rode, with there in his pocket, towards the village. Before reaching the cottage, however, he perceived Ellen, with her grandfather, walking along the road. and a few minutes. brisk trot brought him up to them. He quickly dismounted, and valked by their side; after having admired and caressed the horse, Ellen took it by the bridle, and amused herself by leading it; while Mortimer regarded her with the despest admiration, as he offered his arm 10 Mr. Vernon, who smiled, as he said, "So jou desert me, Ellen, for our friend's farourite, but you see, Mr. Delmar takes pity on me." W 32"

"I did not intend to desert you, sir," replied she, relinquishing her charge, and coming back to his side, "but you know I here horses so much, and so seldom have the pleasure of finding one so gentle."

"True, my love, or of seeing any one who would be equally complainant as its

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DOLD. ie reery 10 master, you should add, to take your place by my side; therefore make the most of your time, and go back to your pet."

She blushed, as Mortimer again placed the rein which she had relinquished into her hand, saying, "Believe me, Ellen, I envy my horse, which is led by so fair a hand, and on which such tender care is bestowed."

"Fie, Mr. Delmar, how can you envy an animal!"

"Because, I fear it cannot appreciate the value of your kindness: but," said he, taking the game from his pockets, "I can make him grateful, by obliging him to bear these birds home for you. There," he continued, laying them on the saddle, and addressing the unconscious animal, "bear the trophies of your master's prowess to the feet of his friends."

"And did you kill these pretty creatures, Mr. Delmar?" enquired Ellen, "how could you be so cruel!" "To have the pleasure of presenting them to you and your grandfather, Ellen. But why do you think it cruel?"

"Because, life is so sweet," she replied, while her blue eye was for a moment raised to his, but it again fell quickly, as it met the admiring gaze of the young man.

"Yes," returned he, "but they were given us for food, Ellen."

"True," she replied, "but still they might all live for me. I could not deprive them of life."

"I do not ask you to do that, I only wish you to accept them, which I hope you will not refuse."

"That, I promise you, she will do with great pleasure," said Mr. Vernon, " for she is particularly fond of game."

"Yes, indeed," answered Ellen, "I am much obliged to you for thinking of me."

"That is no obligation," said young Delmar, in a low tone, "it is the balm of my life."

She coloured, and Mr. Vernon, whose deafness prevented him from hearing these words, said, "How hot you look child, are you tired?"

"No, sir, but you must be, for you have had a very long walk. Will you not go in and lie down?" They had by this time reached home, and Mortimer, after staying with them an hour, took his leave.

Three weeks had now elapsed since the accidental introduction to Mr. Vernon; during the last ten days, one had scarcely intervened without Delmar seeing Ellen, and he fancied he could perceive that she met him with more solicitude than at first; he even flattered himself that Mr. Vernon appeared pleased to see him pay her those little attentions which are so grateful from those we love.

About this time, James Houston left the castle, and the parting with all his young relatives was affectionate, but, to Mortimer's jealous eye, that with Beatrice was pecu-

liarly so, and, as she wished him farewell. she placed in his hands a small packet, and, in doing so, Mortimer could not fail to observe the blush which she strove to hide when she saw his eyes fixed upon her; and Houston's words, "I need not repeat, Beatrice, how much it will be valued," dil not tend to calm him. With an inward exclamation of impatience, he took his hat, and, with rapid strides, pursued the road to Claybrook. As he walked on, his mind was not inactive; he thought, at first, of Beatrice, of the pleasure he had derived from her society, of her behaviour to him; so unaccountable, yet, perhaps, her hand and heart were plighted to Houston before he ever saw her, and in that case she neither could, nor would, behave otherwise than she had done. "Yes, it must be so, or why should the packet be given and accepted? Then, again it came to his mind that several times, within the last two or three weeks. he had observed she looked

paler than formerly, that her spirits, never excellent, were now much depressed. Had he mistaken her? had he judged her too harshly; and left her for the more beautiful Ellen? No! she had repulsed him before he saw Miss Vernon, or had any opportunity of changing his mind. She forced upon his unwilling mind the conviction that his attentions were de trop, and therefore he was perfectly justified in placing his happiness in Ellen's hands. His reflections now took a turn, he feasted on the recollection of the dazzling beauty of this child of solitude, of the perfection of her voice, so soft, so bewitching, and he thought of the innocence of her speech and ideas. so pure, that one she loved might mould her to his will, and make her an angel upon earth. How he could adore and love such a being! How much affection he felt assured he really entertained for her! How often is it that woman is accused of loving power and dominion; and perhaps with

justice, for, sensible of their dependance, their minds soar far beyond physical means; but does not man, vain man! also revel in the superiority which he naturally possesses over the weaker sex? He is weak in his strength, does he not glory and delight in supporting the timid, delicate flower, which clings to him, with far more pleasure than if it gave him no such opportunity of displaying his capability of guarding it? Did not our friend, Mortimer Delmar, feel this? Yes, he persuaded himself he was attached to Ellen Vernon, when his heart was in the possession of another! He was piqued and vexed with Beatrice, Ellen was beautiful, and one over whom he felt he could exert that tender, patronising sway, so gratifying to the nobler part of God's creation; and he thought he should shew the cruel destroyer of his first hopes the little importance of her indifference, by turning to another for the comfort she had denied him; not reflecting that, most probably, his individual happiness was the greatest sufferer in the transaction.

Thus, by the time he had nearly reached Claybrook, he had made up his mind to speak to Mr. Vernon, that very day, in the presumption that he would instantly close with his earnest request to be permitted to look upon Ellen as his future partner for life. Full of this project, he quickened his pace, and had arrived within a few hundred yards of the cottage, when a qualm of conscience, or secret love, arrested his steps. The form of Beatrice rose in his mind's eye, and seemed to demand his affection. He unconsciously stopped, turned round, and then slowly walked away from the home of her he fancied he loved. "If Mr. Vernon should bless my suit," thought he, "and promise me the hand of his grand-daughter, can l give her my undivided affection? Shall I not be tempted to think more fondly o Beatrice than I ought, as the husband

of another? Had I not better fly from rejection on one hand, and temptation on the other? yet, perhaps, I have led the confiding Ellen to believe I love her. Have I not gone too far to recede? Beatrice cannot feel any attachment for me, and I fatter myself Ellen does, or will soon be induced to return my unbounded love. What a weak fool I am to halt so long between two opinions! Courage, faintheart! I will instantly seek Mr. Vernon. and open my heart to him. Beautiful Ellen, thou shalt be mine!" He turned hastily. again approached the dwelling which contained his treasure; and entered the familiar parlour, where he had, from the first moment he beheld Ellen, been rivetted with the personal appearance of her, who had diverted his mind from its only real love. The chamber was untenanted, but every thing gave evidence of its having been recently occupied. Work and books lay scattered on the table, a nosegay, Mortimer

had presented to Ellen, was placed in a vase close to her work-box, while a sketch, he had requested her to take for him, still stood in her drawing frame. Every thing he saw he fancied betokened Ellen's affection, and each moment, as it passed heavily, while awaiting her return, seemed interminable. He examined her drawing, raised the flowers, and inhaled their perfume, drummed with his hand upon the table, walked impatiently to the window, and finally left the cottage. As he did so, Mr. Vernon pushed away the wicket, and advanced, with a smile, to greet his visiter. "Have you long been here, Mr. Delmar?" said he, as they re-entered the house.

"No, sir, but I was disappointed at finding that you and Ellen were from home, since I came expressly to walk with her."

"She is gone to F—— for a few hours, with old Margaret," replied the rector. "Several things were required for the house, she told me."

"Why did she not say so yesterday, sir, and I would have taken her there in my phaeton?"

"She did not think of it, most likely, being accustomed to depend upon herself; besides, she would not liked to have troubled you."

"It would have been rather a pleasure, than a trouble, Mr. Vernon, and I am sorry I lost the opportunity of shewing her it was so."

The old man sat down by the parlour fire, and pointed to an opposite chair, of which Delmar took possession, and, after a few minutes' conversation, Mr. Vernon said, "You will, perhaps, dine with us to-day? Ellen will be glad to see you,—there are so very few who take the trouble to visit us that I must say your acquaint-ance gives us both the greatest pleasure."

"Such information, sir," returned Mortimer, "conveys the utmost gratification to my feelings, since the interest, may I

presume to say, the love of your gran daughter, is the aim of my ambitions His auditor started, but he continue "Yes, sir, her beauty, her innocence, hamade an indelible impression on my hear and your sanction only is wanting authorise the avowal of my sentiment The shortness of our acquaintance ma scarcely seem to warrant this declaration but, from the first instant I beheld th lovely Ellen. I have been a willing captive at her feet." He paused, and Mr. Verne replied, "I will not say I am surprise my young friend, at what you tell me old as I am, I am not blind to the beau and excellence of my dear child, yet, doubt if I ought to permit you to enterta the idea of obtaining her hand. She young, Mr. Delmar, she is innocent, ign rant of every form and custom of t society to which a union with you wou introduce her."

"She would be courted everywhere, sin

interrupted Mortimer, "she would enhance the brilliancy of a coronet—she would—"

"Hear me out," interposed the other calmly. "I doubt not you believe, or think you believe, all this, but I have heard you are noble, and Ellen is the child of poverty and oblivion. Your friends, whom you must consult in a degree at least, would look with contempt and scorn upon her; and she would be rendered miserable by the very means you would take to ensure her happiness."

"My friends, Mr. Vernon, cannot, I am persuaded, fail to concur with me. My father has ever been indulgent, and if, sir, you will waive these objections, I have no fear of my suit. Do not annihilate my hopes, when you can by one word make me the happiest mortal breathing."

"Ellen does not know of the honour you intend her, I think?" said Mr. Vernon in an interogratory tone.

"I have not spoken to her of my ardent

affection, sir, but I have every reason to hope she is not ignorant of it."

"Her feelings must be consulted before I can give my answer definitively, Mr. Delmar, and the accordance of your parent must be free. Do not think me severe or ungrateful for your kindness; believe me, I sincerely thank you for Ellen and myself."

"Permit me also to thank you, sir," returned the young man, "for holding out to me a hope of gaining my desire; I need scarcely say how joyfully I accept the conditions."

At this period of their conversation, to Mortimer's infinite satisfaction, Ellen returned home, and it was with an intoxicating joy that he gazed upon the beauty he now considered his own. With augmented tenderness he met her undisguised delight at seeing him, and he sat down to partake their simple dinner in unalloyed enjoyment. Alas! how short is the season of pleasure! and how severely do we taste the bitter

draught which ever succeeds the transient sweet of life's uncertain cup.

Mortimer passed one happy hour, and but one! for the dinner was scarcely concluded, ere Mr. Vernon, turning to him as he was speaking with much animation to Ellen, observed, "You said, Mr. Delmar, I think, your father's estates were mostly in the sister Island?"

"I did sir, and it is there that Lord Fitz Eustace is, at the present moment."

"What! who!" exclaimed Mr. Vernon, his usually tranquil countenance assuming almost an agonised expression, "Did I hear aright? what is your father's name?" he added almost fearfully.

"Lord Fitz Eustace," repeated Mortimer with evident surprise. The old man turned pale, and gasped for breath, as he said, "Good God! how inscrutable are thy ways!" then addressing young Delmar, he continued, with a violent effort to speak calmly, "By that name you have harrowed

up my very soul—you have unconsc torn open wounds, which years of quillity had partially closed—you ruined your own happiness—you have

"I, sir—I have done this? Wha how do you mean! Why should my faname create such a terrible revulsi your mind?"

"Leave us, my child," said the re-Ellen, who instantly obeyed him. ' gaze upon her; it will be the last tin will bless your sight," pursued he b to Mortimer, who looked aghast, wi eyes fixed upon the retreating girl.

"In Heaven's name! explain this port, Mr. Vernon. Tell me what I done to merit so harsh a sentence?"

"You are innocent, young man; I sins of the fathers shall be visited up children, even to the third and fourth ration," he said solemnly; then, reg Mortimer with a look of mingled pi indignation, continued more calmly:

Would fain be just, although the recital of the suffering of by-gone years may deeply wound me; if you will listen, you shall judge if I can consent that the child of crime and misfortune shall be your wife."

Without being able to articulate a word from surprise, the agitated Delmar sat down, and Mr. Vernon pursued in a severe tone, while his features betrayed no slight emotion: "Had I entertained the remotest idea, Mr. Delmar, that you had any affinity with the monster who caused my misery, I should ——"

"Recollect, Mr. Vernon," interrupted the young man with a flushed cheek, " that though you are speaking of one who for aught I know may have injured you, yet his son is your auditor. Spare, therefore, those invectives, which your injuries may dictate, or if such he incompatible with your indignation, allow me to resign my

treasure without the additional pain chearing a parent reviled."

"You are right, Mr. Delmar," returne the rector more tranquilly, "I will simpl relate the circumstance which precludes th possibility of your marrying Ellen; an when you know how nearly you stand re lated to her, you will be alarmed at th feelings you have ventured to indulge Heaven blessed me with a son, an onl child, on whom I placed my fondest expec tations. He was the pride of my life, an I educated him for the mercantile line not being able to bring him up to th church, as I wished, and a situation in house of business abroad was obtained for him. He bore a West Indian climate re markably well, and at the end of ten year his mother and myself had the satisfactio of seeing him for a few months. The year of sorrow which have intervened since the period make me almost forget that such

season of joy ever existed, and I am tempted almost to doubt whether it be not all a dream. During my Henry's visit he became ardently attached to a second cousin, whose beauty, rather than her good qualities, caught his fancy. She had been wooed by the great and the gay, but, fickle and inconstant, had trifled with all until she unfortunately gave her hand to Henry. It was not an agreeable marriage to me, but his happiness was of the greatest consequence; and I vielded my consent, and in a short time I saw them embark for Barbadoes. At first everything wore a smiling aspect, and I rejoiced in having silenced my forebodings of evil. I heard with pleasure of the birth of a boy, when the accounts became less satisfactory, for the child died at a few months old, and Henry complained of the coquetry and want of affection in his wife. About this period, as I afterwards learnt, they became acquainted with the man whose name I

loathe; he had known Mrs. Vernon before she married, indeed for some time had been dazzled by her beauty; he professed a great friendship for Henry, who, being constantly occupied by his business, was little aware of his real motive for being with Mrs. Vernon. Thus, for months, thi: man frequented my son's house, solely to gratify his guilty passion for his wife, who with equal weakness and criminality, continued to see him even after she was aware o his sentiments. At length the signs of their mutual good understanding became apparent to the injured husband, and he demanded satisfaction of his false friend for the loss of his honour. Mrs. Vernon did no wait the ebullition of the storm of my son's indignation, but fled to the arms of her paramour, who was then just a widower The challenge was accepted, and both the combatants were wounded; but Henry the most severely, and his injuries, added to his grief, reduced him to the brink of the grave, and for several weeks his life was despaired of. He rallied, however, for a season, and, quitting the scene of his disgrace, returned to his unhappy parents, who had the unspeakable sorrow of seeing him sink into an untimely grave from consumption a few months after his arrival."

Here the old man paused, and Mortimer san the big tear roll silently over his fur-rowed cheek. Shocked at the sight of this pungent grief, and pierced to the heart by this sudden and unforeseen destruction of his hopes, Delmar rose, and staggering across the room said, "Pardon me," Mr. Vemon, I have no right or wish to trouble you to say more. I can divine the sequel to your tale, and, seeing the necessity for my departure for ever from this spot, will take my leave."

"Stay, stay," gasped Mr. Vernon, "hear all! little more remains to tell. Stay, Mr. Delmar, I intreat you." Mortimer stopped near the door, and the aged minister con-

tinued, "I will not dwell, sir, upon the agony attendant on the loss of an only child, but will hasten to the conclusion a my misery, which was shortly increased by the death of my beloved wife, to the comfor and support of whom I had ever looked in the hour of trial. She lies in yonder gravvard, beside the son she could not survive and I was left a hopeless, childless widower!" A deep sigh burst from Mr. Vernon'. suffering breast, but he instantly resumed "A year had scarcely elapsed from the period of this sad event, when I received an imploring letter from my wretched daughter-in-law, informing me that, after having suffered much ill-treatment from him for whom she had sacrificed her happiness, here and hereafter, he had obliged her to leave the West Indies, and she had arrived in London entirely destitute with her infant, whence she had travelled or foot as far as York, intending to throw herself on my clemency. There she had

teen taken ill, and assured me she was dring, and conjured me by the charity of my profession to come to the abode where she then was, if only to pardon her crimes. At first I would not consent, I could mt resolve to look upon the deluded creature; but at the end of a week I re-Inted. I remembered I was a christian minister, and I determined to fulfil my duty as such. Hastening therefore to York, I discovered the residence of Mrs. Vemon, and I trust I alleviated the pangs of her last hours, though I only arrived two days before her erring spirit winged its way to the regions above. In the most piteous manner she solicited my protection for her child, which I positively refused, desiring her to apply to the author of her rain, but she protested her intention of leaving it an outcast on the world rather than sue to its inhuman father. In consequence of this determination I promised, yes, solemnly promised when I forgave her, "Good God!" ejaculated Mortimer accents of the deepest grief, "can it | possible?"

"Quite," replied Mr. Vernon sternly it is too true that you love your father daughter. Now, farewell for ever, unhappy youth! Had I earlier known to whom you owed the duty of a son, I might at lea have spared you some pain; but it was n in my power, therefore go. I esteem as pity you, but I contemn and abhor the worker of my misery."

"Your esteem, your pity," said Mortim bitterly, "of what value are they to me? the cannot restore what I have lost. No, kee them both for others more solicitous of subenefits. You cannot wish to bestow eith on the offspring of a man you must hat

I thank you for your courtesy, your candour, and perhaps at a future period I may beable so far to conquer my feelings as to look upon Ellen in her. real character, when we may meet again; until then, I leave you and her." He held out his hand, which Mr. Vernon pressed between his, but made no reply. Mortimer then turned and, opening the door, rushed into the garden, where he met Ellen just returning from a walk; he would have passed her, but her soft blue eye beamed full upon him, and her cheek tuned pale at his agitated appearance. He stopped almost involuntarily, and taking her hand said in a voice scarcely articulate, "Adieu, Ellen, we must part for ever! may you never know the agony I feel at this moment. Forget that such a being as Mortimer Delmar exists."

"What do you mean, Mr. Delmar?" she said timidly. "What has happened? and why leave us so suddenly?"

[&]quot;Because fate has separated us for VOL. I.

ever!" he faltered, "and the love I we have offered as a husband must be char to that of a brother. Beauteous being, f well!" He pressed her small delicate h to his lips, indulged in one long, long, I upon the form he must see no more, and a crystal drop dimmed the brilliancy of eye, he pushed aside the gate, and hur across the fields leading to the car Ellen stood a moment, at a loss to acce for his behaviour, then entering the rewhere her grandfather sat, still in a stat great agitation, she inquired with earness the cause of their friend's incomphensible departure.

"He is gone away for ever, my sv child," said he, kissing her pallid che "you shall some day know the cause so precipitate a measure."

"Now, dear sir, tell me now;" rep Ellen, her eyes filling with tears. "He me I should see him no more; is that deed true?" "Too true. I hope, if he values his own happiness, he will never visit us again."

"But if he values mine, he will," replied the distressed Ellen.

"Say not so, my love, it cannot be; you must forget him: but where did you see him?"

"In the garden, sir, but it was only for an instant; he said something about a brother's love, and then he bade me forget him; but that, indeed, sir, I cannot do."

"Alas! alas! Ellen, I fear the venom of love has taken root in your innocent heart. Come and sit down here. Do not fret, my child, and I will shew you that Mr. Delmar has acted nobly and well in flying from a place which has turned his cup of love to gall."

Ellen shook her head, without speaking, but she sat down, and Mr. Vernon taking her passive hand said, "My loved Ellen, you must arm yourself with fortitude to hear what I have to disclose. As yet, I

have carefully averted every pang, every breath, which could convey anxiety to your tender mind; but since Heaven has willed, my love, that we should unconsciously have met with one who, however he may merit, must not possess your affections, I unwillingly compelled to make you acquainted with some circumstances of your birth, which, from their painful nature, I would still have concealed from you. I known the title of Mr. Delmar's father, I would not have permitted him to risk your and his own happiness by giving him access to my house. Your mother, Ellen, was the wife of my son, and you have ever been taught to believe, or rather encouraged in the innocent deception, that, in mourning over his tomb, you mourned a parent; but the mist must now be dispelled, and you must know that Henry Vernon fell by the hand of your father—the seducer of your unhappy mother!-and it was in her last illness, when abandoned by him, that I

consented to take care of you. I resolved nothing short of obligation should induce me to reveal to you to whom you owed your existence, but the time has unexpectedly arrived, and I must crush your affection for Mr. Delmar in the bud, by informing you that Lord Fitz Eustace possesses the right of a father over you both; and our young friend spoke true in saying he had only a brother's love to offer." deep sigh escaped from Ellen's oppressed heart, and the tears which, from her intense interest in what Mr. Vernon related, had ceased to flow, again trickled fast but silently down her cheek, and, throwing herself into his paternal arms she sobbed bitterly for a few minutes.

"Do not, my dear Ellen," gently remonstrated the old man, not a little pained at her distress, "do not give way to sorrow for what cannot be avoided. Your condition is not worse than it was, and you have hitherto been contented with the protector Heaven has given you."

"And shall ever be, my dearest sir," said Ellen, smiling affectionately through her tears. "All my gratitude, all my best affections are yours, but I must love Mr. Delmar,--but only as a brother," she added, seeing the shade of disapproval which flitted over Mr. Vernon's face. "Oh! why, sir, did you send him away? I might have testified how tenderly I could return a brother's love. Can you not send to him?" Then, starting as if a sudden thought struck her, her countenance fell, and she continued, "But, alas! I forget what an outcast I amno doubt he as earnestly wishes, as I must endeavour, to forget that I am his sister, a spurious branch of the parent tree. Oh! my only friend, teach me to forget everything but your goodness, and I shall again be as happy, as contented, as before this unfortunate, but delusive acquaintance. 1 will love his memory, and so school my heart that, if ever we should meet in future, I may behave as my duty will dictate." She spoke with an energy scarcely to be

expected from one so gentle, and Mr. Vernon regarded her with pride and satisfaction, as he assured her she had by such a determination fulfilled his expectations of her virtuous resolves, and entreated her to persevere in it; then seeing the weight which still hung over her, he added, " Retire to your room, my child, and address yourself to the Power above, who is both able and willing to assist those who call upon Him faithfully. I also will seek that. consolation and composure which this occurrence has deprived me of." He laid his hand tenderly on the head of the fair girl, who in a few minutes found herself in the privacy of her own chamber, where, throwing herself on her knees by the side of her modest couch, and burying her face in the bed clothes, she wept a parent's crime, and her own unfortunate affection.

CHAPTER VII.

Alas! how light a cause may move
Dissension between hearts that love!
Hearts that the world in vain had tried,
And sorrow but more closely tied;
That stood the storm when waves were rough.
Yet in a sunny hour fall off,
Like ships that have gone down at sea.
When heav'n was all tranquillity!

MOORE.

MORTIMER DELMAR pursued his way almos at a short run for some distance, as if anxious, by bodily exertion, to silence the demon of reflection; but, as he proceeded, his pace slackened by degrees, and thought resumed its empire. He could scarcely persuade himself what he had heard was not a dream; one hour before, and he had been

at the acme of his wishes, the successful lover of a beautiful girl; but now-how changed his feelings! At one fell swoop he had been deprived of all hope of securing her to himself, by an acquaintance with a a parent's villany, a father for whom he had hitherto entertained the bighest respect. How could he, after hearing the pitiable tale, and loving the innocent victim of his crime, entertain the same sentiments! How could he forget that the lovely Ellen had been cast destitute on the world by a nobleman, enjoying thousands per annum! As these distressing ideas crossed the mirror of his mind, suddenly he started and asked himself if it were not possible that Mr. Vernon might have told him this story as a pretext to get rid of him; but when he recollected the sanctity of the old man's character, his tears, and just indignation, he banished the unworthy thought, while his cheek glowed with generous shame. "No," said he, mentally, "I cannot believe evil of Claybrook,—but my father,—good heavens! I must this place, or I know not what I madriven to. Evil was the hour in wh consented to visit it."

Heron Castle was now close at hand he could not make up his mind to en and he wandered about an hour lo although it was quite dark, and the: air swept bitingly past him. After a however, the moon looked out from b a cloud, shedding her mild beams o around, and, one by one, the stars to twinkle, and as Mortimer stood be the castle porch, and contemplated the canopy of heaven, with its thousand his mind became more tranquil, and few minutes he turned, and, enterin dwelling, went to his room, whence, h arranged his toilet, he descended t drawing-room.

"I hope you have dined, Mortimer, Sir George, as he entered, "for we d

wait for you, fancying you might prolong your visit at Claybrook till a late hour. How is my good old friend to-day? I think I will go with you next time you walk that way."

"I fear your visit will not be a hasty one, if you wait for me," returned his friend, "as I have this day taken leave of the Vernons, for I am under the necessity of leaving you the day after to-morrow, at farthest; since I scarcely think it would be prudent to defer taking my sister across the water when the season is farther advanced."

"And must you really go to Ireland?"

"Yes, indeed, George, I cannot avoid it."

"If such be the case, Mr. Delmar," said Lady Heron, "we must say no more, as a longer stay might endanger your passage; therefore we can only say how happy we shall be, at any future time, to renew our acquaintance." Delmar acknowledged the kindness he had received, and assured her

that nothing but absolute expediency could take him away so suddenly.

At this announcement of his immediate= departure, Beatrice felt a pang within he= heart, which warned her the affection sh∈ had endeavoured to smother was still un-She now felt convinced h∈ eradicated. entertained no real preference for her, since he had been so constantly at Mr. Vernon's where, she had no doubt, he had deposite his love. She had heard both him and hem brother extol the beauty, the fascination or Ellen, and she was convinced she had robbed her of the attachment of a man to whom she could have voluntarily given her heart. From the moment, however, she thought he preferred another to her, her reserve had worn away, and had Mortimer 'not been blinded, he might, at times, have detected the signs of disappointment in her pallid cheek, and silent behaviour. She, nevertheless, strove to conceal her chagrin, and flattered herself she had succeeded: eye penetrate! her mother had observed the struggle which existed in her daughter's breast, and, with a parent's tenderness, she pitied, without the possibility of being able to relieve her.

In Mortimer, Lady Heron saw nothing to object to, as the husband of Beatrice, and. when she detected the growing partiality between them, she inwardly rejoiced at it. It may be easily supposed, therefore, that she participated in Beatrice's concern at the unfortunate light in which Mortimer had viewed her conduct. Lady Heron had never spoken to her daughter on the subject, having entire confidence that her strength of mind would enable her to overcome her injured feelings. Of George she could not be so sanguine, he had, apparently, not forgiven his cousin her little tollies, for, although he now spoke to her as usual, there was no longer that affectionate kindness in his manner which he had formerly evinced, and, whenever his mother had attempted to remonstrate with him, he had declined entering upon the subject; and the high-spirited Mary, though feeling his neglect keenly, had resisted every persuasion, from Beatrice and he aunt, to conciliate him.

This was the state of the party at the time that Mortimer announced his intention of quitting England immediately.

"Well, Mortimer," said his friend, "I did not expect to lose you so soon, but as my mother says, I must not think of risking your safety for my gratification, therefore I shall only say, if you are inclined for a continental tour in the spring, I shall be most happy to be your compagnon de voyage."

"The continent, my dear George!" said his mother, in surprise. "Surely this is only a momentary fancy, and you will not leave us while there is so much to do on your different estates." 'whether you will accept my proposal, I shall have additional pleasure in contemplating an Italian tour."

"There is no one I should prefer to ourself, George," answered Delmar, "but I my father does not particularly object, propose going immediately across the bannel, after I have placed Maria under its protection, and, if you really mean to to France directly, I will join you, anywhere you may appoint."

"Bravo! Mortimer, in that case we can winter in the south of France, and commence our journey at pleasure."

"Why not stay with us through the winter, George?" said Beatrice, gently.

Beatrice, with its frosts and fogs, besides, I cannot always be tied to home. I must please myself, as well as you, sometimes."

Beatrice was silenced, but Lady Heron said, "I hope you will change your mind, shortly, George."

"If I alter at all, mother, it must be very shortly, since I go when Delmar does."

The conversation was here dropped, and the evening passed much as usual.

"Let me persuade you, Heron," said Mortimer, as they were walking out together the next morning, "let me persuade you to stay here some time longer, as your friends seem to wish it; I will, in that case, stay in Ireland until the spring."

"Impossible," returned George, "I cannot, and will not, remain here. You know the cause of my leaving too well to be surprised at my determination, but I confess I am astonished at your intention of absenting yourself from this country, when, to all appearance, you are so strongly attached."

"George," interrupted the other, gravely, "vou, doubtless, have had occasion to form your own conclusions, on the subject of my repeated visits to Mr. Vernon, and I will own your suspicions were not without foundation, but I laboured under a deception. The scales have now fallen from my eyes, and I discovered yesterday that Ellen is not Mr. Vernon's granddaughter; and that an insurmountable barrier, of a private nature, must for ever separate our families." He paused, and for a few moments a heavy frown, indicative of inward pain at a recurrence to the subject, sat upon his countenance.

"I need scarcely tell you, Delmar," said the baronet, "how truly I sympathise with you; and I am more fully determined than before to accompany you abroad directly. I have ordered every preparation to be made for setting off to-morrow, but you have never told me your plan. Will y sister travel in the phaeton?"

"Till we reach London, where I int to go on board a steamer for Dublin, wl my father's carriage will meet us. If like, I will drive you as far as Nottingh whence you may reach London by coa and I would suggest a trip to my Fa land, where we might take ship for a Fra scaport at our pleasure."

"Capital, Delmar! quite capital! L be settled so, if you please; the plan has entire approbation: did you not say would start at ten to-morrow?"

"Yes, but here comes Lady Heron doubt uneasy at your being away from so long the last day of your stay."

It was as Mortimer concluded, for ladyship, having learned that her son been giving various directions relative a removal to his servant, came to endea again to deter him from his purpose, but her arguments proved abortive, and he so ill requited the affection I proffered that however much I may still love I can no longer deem it prudent to the happiness of my life on the cast die, when I have seen that the attenof any one can draw her away, and her taste for flirtation induces her to t that others can feel though she can-No, mother! I must go away, and t she is aught but my cousin."

Well," said Lady Heron, "I find I yield; your complaints are partly but you should recollect that Mary's proceed rather from thoughtlessness any willingness to offend, and you make allowances for her youth, and I

now. By the time I return she will have learned to know my value, or I may have discovered the superlative virtues of a more constant heart. You have often said 'Look before you leap, George,' and in this instance I have done so. I see nothing but pain to both, if she should behave as she has done. Would that she resembled Beatrice! she would not intentionally injure a fly."

"You have vanquished me entirely, George; when a young man suffers himself to draw comparisons unfavourable to the person he fancies he loves, it is time he should cease to think of her as a partner for life; and I hope this temporary absence may be of advantage to both you and Mary."

"I hope so also, mother. Holloa! Mortimer," he continued, turning round and seeing his friend considerably in the rear, are you inclined to join company, and go with us to the farm? I suppose M'Pherson

will expect me to see him before I go," he added to Lady Heron, as Mortimer approached them.

....

"Certainly, my dear, and the gamelæpers also." Upon this they continued their walk, and Sir George found ample uployment for the afternoon in seeing his several out-door servants. The evening was spent cheerfully, even more so than many preceding, for George was no longer annoyed by the presence of young Houston, with whom Mary had trifled-while she, Pained, though unwilling to confess it, by his approaching departure, was more solicitous to gratify him; and Mortimer and Beatrice, still drawn together by an imperceptible tic, mutually, but unconsciously, assumed a tone of greater kindness towards each other.

As Lady Heron sat in her easy chair by the fire, assiduously knitting, while her young companions were assembled round Mary's harp, her eyes overflowed with tears

as she thought of the thorn which rank in each bosom, and their merry lau sounded as hollow to her ear as she fear it really was. More than one of the pa retired with a smile on their lip, but sorr in their heart, for they knew that th should probably not meet again for ma months, supposing, indeed, they were ev permitted to do so; and neither Beatr nor her cousin felt inclined to court repa on entering their bed-room. The forn drew her chair close to the fire, whi threw its grateful warmth around, as taking up a devotional volume, bent l eyes upon the consolatory page. Mary, the same time, noiselessly drew aside 1 window curtain, and, after gazing for a f minutes through the window, she open the casement, and, leaning on the s looked forth upon the night. There w scarcely a breath of air, yet the atmosphe was chill, owing to a slight frost, and a shuddered as she felt its influence.

The moon had not yet risen, but the tault of Heaven was spangled with innumerable stars, whose light partially revealed the outline of the shrubs which grew immediately on the velvet turf of the lawn; while the woods in the vicinity appeared in still darker gloom, and no sound was heard save the deep tones of the watch-dog, as he responded to the voice of a companion at a distance.

As Mary stood some moments lost in thought, calmly retracing the past, and perhaps striving to pierce the density of the future, which, like the scene before her, only permitted the certainty of George's immediate removal to rise in the mirror of her mind, while uncertainty filled the space beyond, drop after drop fell unheeded from her eye, and her heavy breathing told of a troubled spirit."

"Dear Mary," said the soft voice of her cousin, as she laid her hand on her arm, "Come away from the window, it is too cold for you to stand there so long."

Mary started, "Too cold, Beatrice!" found the room very hot just now; but if be too cold for you, I can close the case ment. There! it is done, now let us bed. I fancied you asleep long sinc What have you been doing?"

- "That which would ease your mind,
 it has done mine," replied Beatrice, layin
 her hand on the book.
- "I could not read," answered Mar; turning to the fire, on which she gazed so instant, and then continued:
- "Study requires a quiet mind, and minis glowing like a furnace. I did not this George would have treated me so ill."
- "I fear you must blame yourself, Mar for the resolution he has taken. He love you too well to pain you until he felt you unkindness."
- "I know I shall not find any consolation in you or my aunt," returned Mary; "ther fore I need not expect it. I dare say it in consequence of your persuasions he going away."

"Fie, cousin! you heard how strenuously my mother urged him to remain. We ought rather to reproach you for depriving us of his society."

Mary made no reply to this just remark, but soon after, with her companion, was endeavouring to court that temporary forgetfulness which sleep affords. Morning dawned ere either had closed their eyes, and languor, consequent upon broken test, was visible on their countenances when they descended to the morning repast.

George evidently assumed an indifference he did not feel, while the warm-hearted Mary tried in vain wholly to arrest those wars which had been unstaunched for some hours. If George only looked at her, her eyes were suffused, and, unable at length to contain herself, she left the apartment.

"Go to her, George," said his mother compassionating her distress. "You should

pour some balm into the wounds you havinflicted."

"Not yet, not yet, mother, I hate scene and I am sure, by her manner, her prot spirit is laid low. I shall not alter m determination; therefore, it is useless see her half an hour before we start."

Breakfast concluded, George sought he cousin, but not with the light step of plesure; he felt unwilling to encounter the burst of grief and contrition which he waware was in store for him. Men, in serial, shrink from female sorrow, they caface the appearance of pain, misery, and death in any shape, better far better than—

A tear in woman's eye,

particularly if she be one for whom the have a tender feeling. What mischief has not this silent token of overwhelmind power caused in the world, and agains which few are proof!

George was sensible of his weakness but he resolved to be firm, and prepared she, reproachfully.

Certainly, you know I never change purpose. I do not wish to hurt your ngs, or your pride, but, as the cousin friend you will ever find me, I would mmend you to be more careful in play-your next game, for it is dangerous pering with affection."

Dear George," replied she, taking his id, while the tears started into her eyes, feel you expect justly, that I should desome atonement for my inconsiderate id unkind behaviour to you. To extend it I will not attempt, although I night, perhaps, complain of your severity. But, on the eve of separation, my proud spirit. George. is beaten down, and, if you

will forgive me, I shall be better able endure your absence, which will other wise be insupportable. I feel I must no repine at the punishment, but, indeed, shall find it very difficult to bear." She have face in her handkerchief and soble aboud.

"I freely forgive you, my dear cousin said George, affectionately kissing her, "v have each crred, therefore need mutu pardon. But I wish you to consider you self perfectly free from this moment; aft what has passed, whatever bond may ha appeared to subsist between us must dissolved; and our hands, if not our hear be left at our own disposal."

"I will not accept your pardon on su terms," rejoined Mary. "You are crucl ask it, George."

"It is indispensable for our happine or I would not urge it. I know not he long I may be away, and, neither for yo sake, nor my own, can I consent to decei you by allowing you to believe any engagement subsists between us."

"Then, George, you are still displeased, and if my love be so unwelcome, it shall be withdrawn." She spoke with difficulty, then placing one hand over her eyes as if to avoid seeing his departure, she held out the other, saying, "Farewell, George, a cousin's good wishes will attend you, and, if possible, I will forget I once loved you."

"It shall not be obliterated from my mind, dear Mary. The day may come that I shall be happy here, but now it is impossible. Write to me, my cousin, promise that."

She bent her head, and, after once more pressing her hand kindly, George left her. Another moment found him in the breakfast parlour, where his friend awaited him equipped for immediate departure.

"One instant, Mortimer," he said, as his fond mother drew him aside to inquire in what manner he had left his cousin; and to enjoin him once more, for her sake, to re-

member the term of her life could n long, and that she should anxiously for his return. "Be assured, my ever mother, you shall find me by your s. soon as it is possible; and, as to Ma hope I have not been too harsh, bu attachment is certainly for the pl destroyed. Ask me no farther, I el you." Seeing her about to speak-" explain all when I write." The pa was soon over, for neither wished to long it, and the mother and son w together to the house door, where Delmar prepared to mount the car "Get up, George, I have forgotten to your sister good morning." So sayii hastily crossed the hall, and found Be standing in tears near the window. started at her appearance, not that h surprised to see her grieve for the l her brother, but because her pale was now crimson; and her eye beame mentarily with satisfaction on his enti "Is all ready, Mr. Delmar?" she inquired with that self-possession, which a female frequently preserves in a greater degree than those of the opposite sex.

"It is, Miss Heron, and I am come to take my leave of you, to thank you for your kindness, and to hope," he added in a lower tone, "ere long we may meet again."

She cordially gave her hand, as she replied "We are ever happy, Mr. Delmar, to see my brother's friends, and, if your visit has given you pleasure, I am glad our endeavours have been successful." She looked kindly, almost tenderly, at him; and for days, weeks, and months, Mortimer remembered the peculiarity of that mild, yet he fancied half reproachful, glance; but at that moment he heard himself called by the impatient Heron, and with a hasty bow he quitted the house, where he was newly awakened to the idea that he had permitted

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his diffidence to misguide him, and he partly inclined to fancy Beatrice, the ge unassuming Beatrice, loved him.

CHAPTER VIII.

But shy so short is love's delighted hour?
Why fades the dew on Beauty's sweetest flow'r?
Why can no hymned charm of music heal
The deeples were impassioned spirits feel?
Can fater's fairy hands no veil create
To hide the sad realities of fate?

CAMPBELL.

But we seem to have forgotten Merton Hall and its inmates. Charles Hamilton had been convinced by the events of the day, and the manner of Sinclair at the archery ball, that he aspired to the affection of Maria; and, like the child who, being in possession of a valuable toy, disregards its enjoyment, but should he see it usurped by a companion, is instantly seized with a

strong desire for that peculiar amusement? so Charles redoubled his endeavours pleasing the young heiress. Her visit had already lasted two months, and she daily expected to be summoned by her brother to join Lord Fitz Eustace; her tardy lover knew that his father was extremely anxious about the connection, although, in accordance with his promise, he had not spoken on the subject for some time. Having no attachment, Charles was less disposed to oppose Mr. Hamilton's wish; and, when he thought he perceived she favoured the young officer, he felt a desire to rival him. which he fancied was the first advance of love. He was aware she had never encouraged him; but he also knew that her father was resolute in his intention of her being united to a man of family. Sinclair was unable to shew that he was descended by a long line of titled ancestors from the Scottish kings, as he could; and he began to think he liked the society of Maria better upon

tarther acquaintance. But we must now return to our friend Frederic, whom we left asleep some pages back.

The hall again became his favourite baunt, for some days, and the flame, which he had struggled for a moment to extinguish, again overcame his prudence, and he sunk, without hope of redemption, into the toils of Cupid.

Maria was ever delightful, ever kind, and he hoped and believed his passion was understood and returned; but he dared not think of Lord Fitz Eustace's opposition, which, conscience whispered, would, sooner or later, annul his dream of happiness. From this state of mind he was aroused, by his regiment being ordered to a distant town, and he saw immediately into what a painful situation he had brought himself for want of a resolute adherence to his prudential measures.

With a melancholy feeling, he set off for the residence of Mr. Hamilton, to inform his friends of his speedy change of station; some of whom, he foresaw, far from sympathising with him, would rejoice at hisabsence. As he rode along, he could not fail to feel and reprehend his own conduct,—he had discovered the danger of involving both Maria and himself in hopeless love, in time to have resisted its insinuating attacks,—he had heard of the improbability of his attainment of the prize -he knew he was destitute of the means of maintaining her as he would wisk his wife to be,—that she was placed, by fortune, in a rank above that in which he had any right to look for a partner,-poo! and unknown as he was; and he was alse acquainted with the fact of her beins sought by another, who possessed severa of these requisites; yet he had weakly cruelly, and even culpably, suffered him self to be deluded by the charms of he society, until he saw himself on the verg of a precipice, from which an effort mus

he made to preserve himself, and where also, he had every reason to fear he had already drawn the object of his affection, since he had little room to doubt she loved him. Yet every motive of duty, honour, and prudence, forbade him to declare himself, as no hope existed of a fortunate issue to his love. He saw, clearly, the course he ought to pursue,—that of quitting her

At once-for all-and ever ;-

without breathing a word of his sentiments for her, and thus, by one vigorous action, save himself from utter destruction, at the expense of a wounded heart, to which, however, the conviction of having acted conscientiously, he hoped, would impart a comfort that would enable him to support the grief of being thought a deceiver. Then came the stunning question, must be leave her unprotected on its brink? The answer succeeded, that he had no means of saving her from the dangerous situation in which

he had placed her, and he cursed himself the author of her fate!

Sinclair, although at times drawn in error from too great an easiness of temphad yet a strong sense of rectitude, a now, deeply pained at conduct of which saw the guilt, he formed the resolution seeing his adored Maria, for the last tim to repair, if he could not avert, the misch he had done, and to banish himself ' ever from the presence of a being, wi whom he felt, to use a metaphor, he cou have been happy in a desert. Armed w this intention, he had nearly reached M ton, when he met Mr. Hamilton, Charl and several ladies on horseback; he w invited to accompany them, but he declinurging the necessity of seeing Mrs. Hanz ton before his departure, and briefly i forming them of the cause of his visit, l. them, to hurry towards the house. To o on such intimate terms with the family, was no difficult task to gain admittane is lady was in the park, he passed he the garden door and stepped across the lawn. On turning into round a holly bush, he suddenly aria, who started with surprise, at carance. "You seem in great haste, is Sinclair," she said, with a smile, been a yard in advance, one of us infallibly have been brought rather the earth than might have been ble, and I, as the weaker vessel, probably have been the one to bend, break."

must pray your forgiveness, if I at you, Miss Delmar," replied Fre"I did not expect to meet you in not. I was informed at the house



still there, but I, being fatigued, am my way to the house."

- "You will, I hope, allow me to retu with you," offering her his arm as spoke.
- "Oh! indeed, I will not trouble you have not far to go now."
- "You must permit me to attend y since it is my last visit here."
- "Your last visit! Are you going leave Nottingham, then?"
- "Yes, immediately, I am sorry to s The regiment is ordered into the West England, to be at hand in case of dist bances, which are dreaded."
- "This is very unexpected, is it not?" quired Maria, in a slightly tremulous voi
- "Extremely so, but, however much a foreseen, or unpleasant, to many of us w have friends and acquaintance here, y doubtless, know

That the king commands, and we'll obey, Over the hills and far away. "It is well, captain Sinclair, you can so easily reconcile your mind to fresh scenes and faces. I have always heard that gentlemen of your profession feel less than others the tearing asunder of friendly ties."

"And do you credit an assertion, Miss Delmar, so unfavourable to us?"

"I have never thought upon the subject, but your apparent nonchalance made me think of what I had always been told."

The young dragoon saw what a dangerous situation he was placed in; he was tempted to combat her opinion by opening his whole heart to her, and declaring how highly he prized her friendship, or rather her love—to point out his utter hopelessness, but his better judgment told him how cruel such a course would be, and he struggled to repress the tenderness which swelled his heart.

"Perhaps," he rejoined, "I have less reason than others to repine at the change,

since I shall be within a few miles of a affectionate mother."

"That is a friend whose value I neve knew, but I can easily suppose that circum stances must completely supersede the pai of parting with friends of a month's, o even longer, acquaintance. But I will n longer detain you now we are at the house I think you will find Mrs. Hamilton walk ing in the grove." She turned, and enter ing one of the rooms by a glass doo vanished from his sight. After seeking in vain, during half an hour, for the goo lady of Merton Hall, he was returnin past the window of a small room, seldon used by the family, and there sat Mari supporting her head with her hands, whi the tears fell fast upon the book she rea or rather tried to read. It was a dangerou moment, to hesitate was to be vanquishe he made one step forwards, with the it tention of avoiding temptation, then u consciously stopped, and gazed upon h

ist—laying his hand hesitatingly on adle of the window, which opened to the ground, he paused a moment, he entered. The painful situation ich he was going to thrust himself before him, but he recollected that t take leave of her, and the sooner done the better; he therefore adinto the apartment, saying, "My Miss Delmar, has been unsuccessed, since I am under the necessity of ag to Nottingham, I must request make my adieus to Mrs. Hamilton raughters."

n you really not stay until she s?" said Maria, rising, "she cannot

"I am sorry it cannot be, Miss Delmar and that I must also take leave of you Be assured your kindness will never be effaced from my mind. You said, just now that we military men have no permanen friendships; but I entreat you to believe my sentiments for you will be an exception to that rule."

"Who would own it, captain Sinclair? Not any one, surely, who wished to be thought well off, which I suppose you do."

"Certainly," he replied, "I believe that feeling is natural to the human breast." Then, finding that his determination was sustaining a severe struggle with his love, he added, abruptly, "but I must trust my character in your hands, confident it cannot be in kinder, and wish you good morning."

Oh! how his blood boiled as he pressed the hand she gave him fervently to his lips; it was deadly cold, and her cheek had lost its bloom, but she said, calmly a

"You have my best wishes for your health and happiness, captain Sinclair; and you may have me to make your excuses to Mis. Hamilton, in perfect security."

"I know you are ever good," he replied, with a bow, as he bade her farewell; then turning, left the room. He stayed only to leave his card for Mrs. Hamilton, then mounting his horse, galloped home, where, s he reflected on the past, he congratulated himself for his decision. " Never having declared my love," thought he, "she will soon forget the heartless Sinclair, and, ly my forbearance, I have, at least, spared her the recital of my hopeless passion. Though she may class me with those selfish beings, who only look to their own pleasure in seeking the love of a fond girl, yet that is better than entailing the displeasure of a parent upon her." Soothed by the conviction of having done his duty to her and himself, he left Nottingham more happy than he had expected; but months could not wholly eradicate the imprewhich had been made upon his hear the thorn be extracted which he had planted in his own breast.

When Maria found herself alone, sank into a chair, and pressed her cla hands tightly over her eyes, for a minutes, as if to exclude all recollect of the scene which had just taken p then, rising, she closed the window: that action, trifling in itself, was too r for her overstrained feelings. The ir of him who had so lately entered b rose before her, and she burst into t which for some time flowed uncontrol "How weak and foolish I am," thought "to suffer myself to be thus overc It is true, I fancied he loved me, and he has left me, as if I were perfectly different to him. His attentions have so great that I hoped I had not been ceived in returning him the affection evidently sought, and this is my rewa

villingness to declare himself on a necessary separation.

Il undoubtedly return," she said as her eyes beamed through her love and hope. "He looked sad, on leaving me, that I am Il not play me false." Cheered lection, she turned a deaf ear to he had so frequently heard of those rts, having been won by the insitentions of young and thoughtless been abandoned by them to deen circumstances had prevented carrying on the cruel game.

ural good sense and strength of to her aid, enabling her to bear



time to seek her friends, who had by this time returned to the house. Charles heard with satisfaction of young Sinclair's abrupt departure, as it left the field open for him; and his behaviour towards Maria now left no doubt of the sincerity of his intentions. His father, delighted with the apparent prosperity of his project, and solicitous for the ultimate success of the dearest wish of his heart, had written to his noble friend, Lord Fitz Eustace, expressive of his hopes that his son, the heir of Earl Glenartney, might be the successful suitor for the hand of Miss Delmar; urging, at the same time, a desire for this wish being kept secret from the young people at present, as he had found that matches, from being too much pressed, were not unfrequently frustrated To this he received in answer, a letter, it which the baron appeared charmed wit the proposal, giving it his entire approba tion, and testifying much pleasure at th projected union of the families. Thus fa he scheme prospered, and Mr. Hanilily, nay hourly, expected to hear
earles had complied with his injuncand had been accepted; when Morelmar arrived from the north for the
of conducting his sister to their
Many were the entreaties with
was assailed by all the family to
m the pleasure of his company for
tys only, but he was immovably
his determination to proceed
the season was already far
d.

also joined in his plan of locomor, since the young officer's flight,
no longer found the pleasure she
nerly done in the gaieties of the
id, though she sustained her cheerin the presence of the family,
ide her thoughts would invariably
Sinclair. His unaccountable beharew a shade of melancholy over her
s at times, which, however, she never
L. I.

appeared to carry with her beyon seclusion of her chamber.

Merton Hall was still full of conwhen her brother made his appearance Charles, taken by surprise, at last a was not the time to talk to her of even could he have found an opportune, therefore, gave it up for the predetermining if his father still presse measure, to take a trip to Ireland.

As he handed her to the phaete ventured to say how greatly he wa appointed at her being carried off s expectedly, since his family and h in particular had calculated upon the sure of a more extended visit. "departure will leave a vacuity, my Miss Delmar, in all around me, w have no hope of removing, until I at to have the pleasure of meeting y London, which I shall hope to do as as you revisit this country."

She smiled, and coloured slightly

less me! Maria, how those girls talk; ould drive me distracted in a week.
ould you stay there so long?"

eave them, when you had promised he, and delayed your arrival so You would have found me ready lling before this, had you found the less seductive, and me more imt."

nduced by Heron's solicitations to g my stay to a great length, and you surprised to hear that our friendship not admit of a separation, since Sir e has agreed to accompany us to d. whence. if my father consent. we



sister: "I hoped to keep you all the winter quite to myself, but I suppose the London season will alone attract you home, and I must now make the most of you."

"At present I have no intention of seeing England again for some time, but the term of my absence is undecided."

Their progress was thus beguiled by affectionate conversation, until the capital rose before them; where they were joined by the baronet; and, before leaving which, Mortimer wrote and despatched the following letter to Mr. Vernon:

London, October.

DEAR SIR,

The sudden and startling disclosure I learnt at you—dwelling must prevent, at least for the present, m_return to the scene of my unfortunate affection

Alarmed and shocked by your disclosure, I hav resolved upon quitting this country, and I truss time and reflection will restore my peace; but apresent my breast is in a tumult of contending emotions. Yet I do not say I will not return to Claybrook; on the contrary, I hope the time may come when I shall be able to meet Ellen as the brother and friend I wish to prove myself. Accept

titude for your kindness and cordiality, and me, when I assure you that I shall be ready imes to act for Ellen any where, and in any a which you may deem my services useful to fell her from me how much I have struggled ass my unholy passion, and I believe the love d convey in this letter is strictly fraternal. Believe me, with every sentiment of respect.

Yours, &c.

MORTIMER DELMAR.

ne party then embarked at the Tower is for Dublin, and, after a rough, though a passage, of three days, arrived at the ter Island; whence, after a few weeks fourn, Sir George accompanied his distited friend to the Continent.

Lord Fitz Eustace took an opportunity, fore Mortimer's departure, of informing son and daughter of the contemplated lance, but resolved not to torment her on subject at present, she being far from ll. Her indisposition was attributed to separation from her brother and her ands at Merton Hall, and her father was stantly flattering himself that by an

early return to London he should reher spirits. But he knew not that di pointment was the main cause of her gle Maria was perfectly silent on the sul of Sinclair, though, in the retirement of ancient baronial mansion, she had le to indulge the painful recollections. neither felt nor expressed any surpris her father's announcement of Charles's tachment, since his conduct had pla testified it; and, as Lord Fitz Eustace not ask for her compliance, she heard proposal in silence. During the time intervened before they arrived in Lo for the season, her hopes of Sinclair's re had faded from her mind, and, though germ of her love for him still lay dorn in her heart, the young and vigorous ; which had sprung from it had with away; and she contemplated a union Charles without dislike, though certs not with any great degree of enthusiasr The second week in April brought

d his daughter to London, and mmenced her third campaign to trance under equally favourable with the two preceding. She had ined her twenty-first year, that which the beauty and freshness of still heightened by the full deveof female charms. Every thing ild dazzle and delight was placed command by her father, vet Maria plated with diminished pleasure her to the gaieties of the spring. Her , whom she tenderly loved, and society had communicated so much re to her in every party, still re-I abroad; and his return could not icipated, since he proposed visiting , after having finished his projected 1 Italy. She also felt that she was to meet the man to whom her hand be given, probably within a few s; and, though she had endeavoured other every recollection of Sinclair

she was aware she did not feel that affection for Charles which matrimony required _

Mr. Hamilton, for his son's sake, resolve visit the metropolis, and therefore took a furnished house in Berkeley Square= Thus situated, he was enabled to watc the game he was so anxious to expedite, an he failed not to take every opportunity - 1 seeing Lord Fitz Eustace and his daughter He urged his son by every at his house. means to settle the affair, by reminding him of his own impotance to provide him with suitable means to support the expected title; and represented the chance of his again meeting with such a brilliant alliance. Partly influenced by these arguments, and conscious of having by former conduct in a degree compromised honour, Charles renewed his attentions to Maria on their reunion in the fashionable world; and in the course of a few weeks was involved in the gulf from which he had feebly endeavoured to escape. His

mornings were now devoted to walks and rides with Maria and his sisters, and in the evenings he met her in the crowded ballroom, the concert, or the opera. He found her ever urbane, ever elegant and pleasing, and her father eager to encourage him; it is, therefore, not surprising he was soon fairly caught in the golden snare into which his father had hurried him. In short he proposed, and was accepted. Yet no marked affection was displayed on either side, Maria received him as her future husband with courtesy, but it was visible at that time her love was not his. It is not female affection which is of the primary consequence before marriage; such is woman, and such her character, that her tenderness increases by time; and even should she evince no particular attachment before her union, she most likely becomes a good and devoted wife, should she experience even a less degree of affection than might be expected. Man, on the contrary, with so many other opportunities of amusement, so many attractions besides those afforded by his home, should love truly and exclusively, ere hereceives the hand for which he sues, since his affection rarely augments after the attainment of his object.

Charles Hamilton did not entertain any very strong attachment for Maria, although by constant attention to her, sentiments. which might be denominated esteem, had arisen in his mind. His vanity also was gratified by the congratulations of his friends, which, immediately on the announcement of the match, were showered on him. He was hailed by his young companions as a lucky dog, in winning theprize so many had longed to possess, while his other friends regarded it favourably, from that, as well as various other causes; and he deceived himself into the belief that he loved. The end of June was at length fixed upon for the ceremony to take place, and Maria, anxious for Mortimer's

presence, wrote to him, urging his return. There was but little time to spare on his journey, if he obeyed the summons, being then at Milan, and she had no fear of his compliance, as he had ever made it a point to gratify her. The interim therefore passed in a tranquil expectation of his arrival, and in the ordinary preparations for her great change. Every thing progressed smoothly, the important day approached, but no Mortimer had arrived; sometimes Maria thought of asking for delay, but she knew that it would be sacriking the wishes of all her friends to her fancy; she therefore remained silent, and a circumstance, which happened about this time, induced her to hasten, rather than retard her marriage. She was at a ball where she again met-Frederic Sinclair! He whom she had endeavoured to banish from her mind. Both started, perhaps both were embarrassed; certainly, Maria felt a strange trepidation, which, however, she

mastered, when she observed the distan with which the captain returned her bow, at then advanced with a stiff air to speak. F a few minutes they conversed, but with a serve alike painful to each, when Charles, a proaching, claimed her hand for the ensui quadrille, and passed Sinclair with a slig and haughty salutation. One look Frede gave her as she passed, which called a blood to her cheek, but she did not a serve the bitter smile which flitted over features as he turned to another part the room.

When she went down into the refree ment room with her partner, who was qu a stranger to her, she found Frederic cla beside her. "Will Miss Delmar permit to offer her anything," said he, "a wi of this chicken, perhaps?"

"Thank you, a glass of white wine all I wish," replied she.

"There is not such a thing to be he Maria," said Charles, who overheard l

"I have been trying to get one mother in vain. There is such a

vertheless, if there be one in the Miss Delmar, you shall have it," inclair, as he lest her to seek it. In minutes he was seen returning, ng, with some difficulty, the desired rage, which, although reduced to half lass, by the frequent concussions to ch it had been subjected, he succeeded placing in her hand. His smile of satistion, at her kind acknowledgment of his liteness, was returned by Hamilton with frown; Maria was not blind to this conluct, she saw that Charles disliked the young officer, for which aversion her heart told her there might be a cause, therefore she avoided farther collision with her former admirer, and sought to efface the little impression this rencontre had made upon her. She felt angry with herself for the Galing which had arisen in her mind on the meeting, and turned, with virtueresolution, to the contemplation of immediate wedding. The momentous d at length arrived, but with it no brother
She watched for him anxiously until the last moment, but in vain!

It is unnecessary to accompany the part to St. George's, Hanover Square, where, course, as usual, there was quantum sufficion of blonde, orange flowers, and tears, without which many, we fancy, deem the ceremony but half complete. Though Maria was agitated, there was no scene, for she retained sufficient command over herself to act her part; and, setting off for Paris from the church, she was spared the additional pang of subsequent leave-taking.

Some months rolled on, and the newly married pair, after having remained abroad six weeks, had repaired to Lord Fitz Eustace, with whom the winter was consumed.

CHAPTER IX.

Let reason teach what passion fain would hide,
That Hymen's bands by prudence should be tied.
Venus in vain the wedded pair would crown,
If anyry fortune on their union frown.

LORD LITTLETON.

MEANWHILE, Mortimer and Sir George still intinued in the South of Europe. At the ne of leaving their native country, such doesn the distress and excitement of former, that nothing but constant bodily ivity could, in any way, calm his mind; would climb the steepest mountains, or k immense distances, to produce forfulness of the varied, painful events of autumn; he was silent and dejected,

until roused by company or wine, when hi usual amiable temper was not unfrequently marked by a bitter irony, totally unlike himself. On account of this unsettled disposition, the two young men did not remain stationary in the south of France, as they had at first intended, but proceeded from Marseilles by sea, to Leghorn, whence they arrived, after some time, at Milan. The news of Maria's marriage did not reach Mortimer until after he had left that city, consequently, he found he had not sufficient time to comply with her request: he had written to her in reply, and, feeling much repugnance to retrace his steps at present, he continued his route to Naples. During his stay there, the Baronet saw, with much pleasure, that his friend's melancholy greatly abated, though he knew not the cause, since Delmar rarely referred to himself. The truth was, that time, that great ameliorator, assisted by variety, had tended to remove the acute remembrance



hat had taken place at Heron Castle. acquaintance with Ellen he thought, ecal a painful dream, the principal of which indeed are ineffaceable. th loses all the horror of its reality as we are completely aroused from nbers. He thought of her with , or pity, for he knew how deeply been injured, and he resolved, on irn, to repay, by his kindness and n, the wrongs she had received. regard to his partiality for Beatrice , he still entertained the soothing ection that her farewell had impressed ith, and a hope yet lingered, however of having an opportunity of renewttentions, which various little circums now told him he had erred in ng displeasing. Through George he imes heard of her, and the secret re any account of her gave him is balm to his wounded spirit, and if letter she mentioned his name, he experienced a satisfaction, which was a convincing proof of the power she yet exercised over his mind. He subsequently accompanied George in his tour through the Greek islands, in a state more fit for real enjoyment.

The latter behaved with his usual gaiety, he never appeared to remember his attachment in England, but really to have freed his heart at the moment he bade his cousin think of him no more; yet, could his real feelings have been decyphered, it would have been discovered that he had frequently repented his precipitation, though his natural aversion to own himself in fault prevented his return home until it was too late. After an absence of eighteen months, he had almost determined to leave Mortimer alone, and repair to England, when he received information of an affair which dashed all his resolutions, all his hopes aside, and induced him to change his intentions and still to continue a wanderer.

wase with her triends, and she felt as to return to the Hall, where she had of so many years. Behold her, then, tled in her favourite abode with her two panions; each had felt keenly the able of the travellers; the former knew her too well to expect him to relent, and his pirture for a probably long period, at a ne when she had scarcely recovered the st shock of her husband's death; and, bisequently, when George's society was, if bssible, more dear to her than ever-his sparture at such a season was doubly pain-1. The gentle Beatrice struggled with the vom that oppressed her for some time, for a had felt equally with Delmar their last her. That Mortimer was fickle or istant she was unwilling to believe; fore she condemned herself, as we a have said, for precipitation: but, he anxious in her own mind to exculpate she suffered and sorrowed. Beatric not one of those to permit her own as to supersede every other consideration therefore devoted herself to her m and frequently strove, by a false hil to animate her, and induce her to b she had conquered her feelings.

Lady Heron was not deceived by she saw how deeply her daughter w fected; and, with a tender solicitud urged her, early in the winter, after parent such a visit could have no charms for her, but, on the contrary, she should feel so lonely, amongst thousands, that she was convinced she was much happier with a mother whose love was dearer to her than everything else. "Indeed," she added, "I should feel so persuaded you would want something I could do for you, that I should have no pleasure from my aunt's kindness in taking me out. No, my dear mother, permit me still to be your companion; and let Mary go to town, since both or either are invited."

After using various arguments, with a similar result, Lady Heron at length consented to Mary being her daughter's substitute, and Beatrice saw her cousin's embarkation for a gay world without a wish to accompany her. Mary, with characteristic heat, had felt indignant, rather than grieved, by George's resentment, and, after the first ebullition of sorrow for his treatment was past, her high spirit prompted

her to treat him with the coolness he him self had recommended. For this rease her correspondence with him was so la guid that it was scarcely worth such denomination, and the letters of each, li angels' visits, were few and far betwee This angry feeling settled, after a time, in an indifference as unfortunate for hers as injurious to her former love for hi How little do the young and thoughtl€ consider, when they indulge or encoura their spleen, how inimical such feelin are to the growth of true affection! lover's quarrel is frequently regarded ! them as a cementer of firmer affection, as a trivial circumstance, which a sho period will remove. Love is truly a c pricious power; but it is also a most d licate plant, which requires constant ca in the first days of its infancy: stor may break or uproot it, and disputes te to weaken, if not entirely destroy, that aff tion which might, under the influence of l

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had found her cousin determined. e resolved to comfort herself with rigour. Thus her tenderness for him in the course of the following twelves; and, when she quitted the Hall and red to London, she could scarcely be to entertain any love for George bethat natural to their near affinity .-Freeman, the aunt she now for the time in her life visited permanently, been for several years a widow, and constantly moved in the best society, re, as well as since the decease, of her band, therefore with her Mary found no nt of amusement.

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disposition, she should have seized with avidity the dazzling bauble held out to her. It was soon known she was a girl of good fortune, and she was courted and flattered by a bevy of young men, who amused themselves with her lively conversation, at the same time that they looked to the sterling qualities of her purse.

It was now that she had full scope for her coquetry; she was delighted to have it in her power to confer her favours on all, or either, of the gay troop which surrounded her; or to see them piqued by her attention to a new favourite. Few were those, however, whom her smile or frown could affect; since they were mostly, like herself, totally insincere. They were of that class who are ever ready to be seen parading the Park, riding with their hands cased in pale primrose coloured gloves, leaning on the carriage door of a beautiful, a rich, or a fashionable woman; of that class who are ever ready to play the butterfly on every

occasion, but who at the same time are as fickle as the beautiful insect they resemble. Among those whom she had distinguished more particularly was the young Sir Harry Dinely, a man of good family, of prepossessing appearance, but of irregular, dissipated habits. A great part of his property had already been squandered on the turf, and he wisely thought a wife with twenty thousand pounds would be no bad prop to a half-ruined man. Mary took his fancy; and, in a moment of excitation. he resolved to make her his own. Her coquetry alone displeased him; but he consoled himself with the idea that he should be able to overcome, or at least to curb, that propensity, when once master of her affections; and he was not deterred from his intentions.

It does not lie within our province, neither is it our desire, to detain our readers so much from the more important parts of our history, as to enter into the details of



from her own lips the avowal of her c ponding attachment. He was not le following her to the Hall, where his p sals, on being made known to Miss mont's guardians, were politely, but tively, declined.

But it was in vain to argue we persuade Mary; she openly declar her aunt that she was determined no should induce her ever to think for stant of being united to her cousin that, though her friends now thought to forbid her to marry Sir Harry, one to month would place every thing at he disposal, and then—This threat, a plied, grieved and displeased Lady is who immediately wrote upon the sub-

After his cousin's undisguised declarations, he should only be rendering her and himself uncomfortable; and, though he might regret the course he had pursued, not being able to avert its consequences, he begged his mother not to think about him, but to make Mary happy, if possible.

Lady Heron perceived with pain the whole tenor of this letter was expressive of disappointment; but, as she easily comprehended her son's feelings, she resolved not to renew the subject, particularly as her niece continued perfectly resolute. With his recommendation to favour Sir Harry's suit, she dared not comply, since Mary's happiness would probably be sacrificed; and she loved the mistaken girl, with all her faults, as a daughter. As soon as she was aware of the ill-fated attachment of Sir Harry Dinely, Mary was made a ward in Chancery, by which means her fortune was placed in

safety, and her lover effectually deterred. for the present, from urging his suit.

These measures only made Mary more obstinate, and, fixing her mind upon her majority, as the term of her thraldom, she contrived to correspond with, and even at times to see, Sir Harry, until that event made her capable of disposing of herself. For some weeks anterior to the twentyfirst of July, the day on which she was of age, every thought was turned to her marriage, every order was issued-for Lady Heron, seeing her opposition was useless, finding her arguments and advice totally disregarded, and that she could not deter Mary from this ill-advised and perilous step, yielded a tacit consent to her union: thus she again constantly saw Sir Harry, and every thing was prepared that could be effected previous to that day. It came and it sped———then all was excitement, all bustle—the papers that required her signature, and business that awaited her decision, were disposed of; and, on the thirtieth of that same month, the Morning Post announced that "on the previous day were married, at the parish church of Berner's Ford, in Hertfordshire, by the Rev. T. Goodman, Sir Harry Dinely, of Spring Hill, in the county of Staffordshire, to Mary, only child of the late Colonel Beaumont, of the H. E. I. C. S.!!"

The happy couple immediately set off for the Baronet's estate, to spend the honey moon. 214

her to treat him with the coolness he himself had recommended. For this reason her correspondence with him was so languid that it was scarcely worth such a denomination, and the letters of each, like angels' visits, were few and far between. This angry feeling settled, after a time, into an indifference as unfortunate for herself as injurious to her former love for him. How little do the young and thoughtless consider, when they indulge or encourage their spleen, how inimical such feelings are to the growth of true affection! lover's quarrel is frequently regarded by them as a cementer of firmer affection, or as a trivial circumstance, which a short period will remove. Love is truly a capricious power; but it is also a most delicate plant, which requires constant care in the first days of its infancy: storms may break or uproot it, and disputes tend to weaken, if not entirely destroy, that affection which might, under the influence of less hasty and rude attacks, in time become firmly attached to its new tenement, when it will stand fearlessly before countless difficulties and dangers.

Mary had found her cousin determined, and she resolved to comfort herself with equal rigour. Thus her tenderness for him waned in the course of the following twelvemonths; and, when she quitted the Hall and repaired to London, she could scarcely be said to entertain any love for George beyond that natural to their near affinity.—

Mrs. Freeman, the aunt she now for the first time in her life visited permanently, had been for several years a widow, and had constantly moved in the best society, before, as well as since the decease, of her husband, therefore with her Mary found no want of amusement.

Accustomed to a life of tranquillity, and suddenly placed in a situation where every thing was new and every thing charming in her eyes, it is not surprising that, with her

in dispensing his bounty. Mr. Vernon had studiously avoided encouraging the least precosity in her, preferring to make her rather a plaything than a companion; consequently her mind was as pure and uncontaminated as it was possible for that of a mortal to be, and she was idolized by all around her. But while she had thus lived, loving and beloved, the rector had not observed that this beautiful and innocent girl at eighteen, possessed a character as unformed as that of a child. He was blind any of her faults, which, in truth, were few; and, while he enjoyed the solace her society, he entirely overlooked the instability of her character. Carried away by every impulse, she was powerfully affected, at first, by joy or sorrow, but was not long subject to its influence; and for that reason she recovered her spirits in the course of a few weeks after the painful disclosure, and the rectory was shortly restored to its wonted happiness and quietude.

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visits among the sick and aged cot The gentle Ellen had already dispens of her little store of comforts to a t den female, while Mr. Vernon admir to the spiritual wants of the inva reading a portion from the Holy Scri when their attention was drawn from pious occupation by an unusual noi ceeding from the more central part village; and in the next moment peasants were seen running from directions towards one point. Elle ened to the door, and turned her e xiously in the direction of the sound she perceived, at a short distance road, a group of people collected r carriage, which had apparently been turned. Without a moment's hesita even saying a word to Mr. Vernon, rather than walked to the spot, and demanded "What was the matter?" informed that a gentleman was hurt overturn of the chaise, caused by the

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Accustomed to a life of tranquillity, and suddenly placed in a situation where every thing was new and every thing charming in her eyes, it is not surprising that, with her exertions to restore the young man should prove successful.

Meantime, within the cottage a activity, its inmates tried various tives, usual in such cases, at first effect, but at length a slight mover the pulse was discernible; and, as by hope, to increased endeavours, the soon the satisfaction of seeing the bl lips begin to quiver, and then a de broke from the oppressed chest "See, he revives, grand-f sufferer. said Ellen, in a low tone, as she con to bathe his temples. Mr. Vernon acquiesced, and continued his efforts voice of Ellen, gentle as it was, rou dormant faculties of the invalid, as few moments he unclosed his eyes, ca languid look upon the anxious count of the beautiful girl who bent over hi his ideas were too confused to be light, the strange scenes, united violent pain under which he was su:

ere too much for his newly awakened enses, and he immediately relapsed into a ate of insensibility. Equally alarmed, and istressed, Mr. Vernon now expected his nedical friend with anxiety, without, however, relaxing his attentions to his guest, who continued to baffle all their village Esculapian skill, until Doctor Brownlow's arrival.

By his applications the stranger was soon restored to his senses, but such was his state that, although no bones were fractured by the fall, Doctor Brownlow advised him to keep very quiet, and certainly to remain where he was for a few days; promising to see him again on the following morning. In compliance with this advice, Mr. Hargrave (for such was the name on a card found in the gentleman's pocket, during his insensibility) Mr. Hargrave agreed to have the chaise sent away, ordered his portmanteau to be brought to the cottage, and, as he felt considerably

indisposed, retired to the room prepared for him. The evening was one of anxiety to Mr. Vernon and Ellen, unaccustomed as they were to anything so alarming as the accident which had happened. Mr. Hargrave appeared to the former, who attended him with much solicitude, to be very unwell, and the latter failed not to participate in his anxiety. So much indeed was she excited by the events of the day that it was late before she could resign herself to sleep, and it was still early when she entered the parlour, impatient to learn from Mr. Vernon the state of their guest.

"Well, dear sir," said she as soon as they met, "is Mr. Hargrave better? I have been expecting to see you with your report the last half hour."

"I am happy to say, my dear, that his health appears so much improved that he declared his intention of rising, but I have persuaded him to remain quiet until after Brownlow's visit, which will be early."

I anticipated," returned Ellen, smiling; "You seemed so alarmed last evening, for the consequences of the fall, that you made me quite uneasy, and I have dreamed all hight long of people being killed, and others going mad, until I fancied the gentleman must be worse."

"Silly child," said the old man, fondly stroking her cheek as he took his seat at the breakfast table, "I did not think you were such a coward. But, come, we must send Mr. Hargrave some breakfast."

On the doctor's arrival, he pronounced favourably on the stranger's state, declaring that there did not exist any occasion for his confining himself to his room; expressing his hope of seeing him completely restored to health in a week, at the same time reiterating his injunctions to remain quiet during that time, before resuming his journey. How far Mr. Hargrave might have been induced to comply with this

advice, under other circumstances, must now remain a mystery; but having viewed Ellen's exquisite beauty on the preceding day, and being one of those who regard female loveliness with more than common pleasure, it required very little persuasion to engage him to prolong his stay. With Mr. Vernon he was much pleased; his urbanity and kindness were so entirely the offspring of his nature that he could not feel himself an intruder, while Ellen insensibly won her way in his favour. With a frank simplicity, unknown to the great world, she delighted in affording him the amusement which, for several days, his state demanded, for, having received some severe bruises, the stiffness consequent upon them confined him the first day or two to a couch. She sought every thing which she thought would add to his pleasure or comfort; produced every scrap of literature which the cottage could boast, and let no opportunity escape of waiting upon him. What man does not

feel, though he may not be ingenuous enough to own, the incense offered to his natural individuality by his finding himself the object of a lovely girl's solicitude! Does he not revel in the delight of her winning attention, and experience a species of luxury which, like the voice of the Syren, leads him farther and farther into an enervating inactivity, while he is swiftly carried imperceptibly towards a dangerous Charybdis!

Under the influence of these feelings, Mr. Hargrave was unwilling to own himself restored to his wonted health, since such a declaration must unavoidably compel him to take leave of friends for whom he had already conceived a strong partiality. Thus he permitted himself to be considered an invalid some days beyond the time he had any claim to the appellation. He had insinuated himself into the good will of all around him; he accompanied Ellen to her little school, or attended

her in her progress through the village on her charitable expeditions, where his munificence was rewarded by the blessings of the poor, and, what was far more valuable and gratifying to him, a sunny smile of grateful acknowledgment from Ellen. When in the cottage he would read any, or every thing, to her and Mr. Vernon, conveying additional attraction to the volume, whether light or serious, by his full and richly toned voice. He also gratified the former by a great attention to her favourite dumb companions, and, in short, took every means of gaining the affection of one who, it will readily be believed, was already mistress of his heart.

A fortnight had insensibly rolled away, for many days Hargrave had not been able to play his part of invalid, faute de moyens, and he felt he had no longer any right or reason to impose on Mr. Vernon's hospitality. He, therefore, reluctantly ordered a postchaise on the following morning to proceed, and

informed the rector of his intention; at the same time letting fall such hints of his admiration for the fair girl, who had been his constant companion for some time, that left little room for doubt of his having conceived a passion for her. Mr. Vernon, however, did not take alarm at this circomstance, since he saw nothing more Datural than for his visiter to be charmed ith his favourite; he had been pleased ith the society of one whose elegant maners and lively wit amused his solitude, and he, like most men, was tardy in observing the growing interest on the part of Hargrave for Ellen. Besides, his duties leading him frequently among his flock, the young people had been left more together than might, perhaps, be considered prudent or even just for their repose; but Mr. Vernon, simple-minded and unsuspicious, never for an instant supposed that. by his want of surveillance, he was furnishing every facility for the production of feelings equally powerful and hazardous.

Ellen's naiveté was so great that his suspicions were not roused; when, therefore, on the eve of departure, their guest signified how much his interest was excital for Mr. Vernon's supposed grandchild, and his intention of stopping at Claybrock again for a few days, on his passage from the north, the good clergyman began to fear for the happiness of his protegée, 5 which was not decreased during the month of Mr. Hargrave's absence. He saw her unusually pensive, and, unlike her ordinary habits, listless and uneasy, while her spirits at times flagged more than they had eves done before; and the reception she gave Hargrave, on his return, completely removed every doubt which could remain of her attachment. The sparkling eye, the flushed cheek, and tremulous, yet fervent, pressure of the hand, proved to Mr. Vernon that she returned Hargrave's equally decided joy

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at their reunion; and he therefore resolved immediately to discover more about him than he had thought necessary to do, while he was only a temporary inmate of his house. Mr. Vernon anxiously waited the moment that Hargrave's avowal should enable him to demand such explanations as he had both a right and desire to receive. He was not long left ungratified, for, on the third morning, Hargrave, having taken a walk with his friends, followed Ellen into the green-house, where she was busily tending some favourite plants. For a few minutes he assisted her in divesting them of their withered leaves, then drawing her arm gently within his, he led her down the shrubbery.

It is unnecessary to relate their conversation; suffice it to say that, ere many minutes had elapsed, he had offered his hand and heart upon the altar of love; and had received Ellen's permission to speak to Mr. Vernon. Scarcely, however had

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she yielded so far, than she shot like an arrow from a bow through a side gate, and quickly regained the house, leaving the exhilarated Hargrave to pursue his own course. Ellen's countenance, as she entered the parlour, betrayed to Mr. Vernon that something had occurred to agitate her; but, rightly judging the cause, he forbore to notice her tearful eye; and, on leaving the room shortly after, he encountered his guest, who was not long in making him acquainted with his demand. Having listened to this, the rector took the young lover's hand, and, with tears in his eyes, replied, "As far as I know of you at present, my young friend, I am safe in saying that I see no objection to your union with my little Ellen, whose happiness you may already have discovered is one of the dearest wishes of my heart; yet there is still something I would inquire concerning your family, your connections, sir, which must satisfy my expectations and wishes before I can give you an unqualified consent to your considering Ellen your own."

"That is only just, sir," returned Hargrave; "I flatter myself you will not find anything to disapprove of in your inquiry. My family is ancient, and has the honour to claim a descent from the Scottish kings. For myself, sir, I am independent, and expect on the demise of a distant relation, who has adopted me, to come into possession of a good property. Your doubts, if you still have any, may all be satisfied by application to a friend of mine, who is tutor to the son of Lord C——, who, I believe, resides somewhere in this neighbourhood. He, I am sure, will testify to the uprightness of my character, and ——"

"I would not have you suppose I have my fear of your character, Mr. Hargrave," interrupted Mr. Vernon, fearful he should fead by his hesitation, "only you know our acquaintance has been short."

"Oh, certainly, sir; I am perfectly will-

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ing, nay, solicitous you should ascertain the truth of all I have told you; and, if you please, will go over to my friend and request him to call upon you, since you are not in the habit of going so far from home."

To this Mr. Vernon, who was anxious not to let his young friend think he doubted his respectability, would scarcely consent, though he at length acquiesced, in consequence of Hargrave's pressing him on the subject; and the plan was carried into execution that very afternoon, and he obtained the promise of his friend to call at the rectory the following morning.

Accordingly the unsuspicious clergyman was visited by a gentleman named Edmonds, who confirmed every thing which he had previously learnt from Mr. Hargrave; adding, also, that his character was unimpeachable.

Mr. Vernon's unworldly habits, however, prevented his making many inquiries of a person like Mr. Edmonds, whose easy

ers, or rather effrontery and polished 'ence, the rector mistook for the open. sentiments of a generous breast. iformation was conveyed with such of perfect assurance that Mr. Veruld not hesitate, and seemed comitisfied; indeed, how could he doubt th of circumstances which he was to hope were advantageous to his No sooner had he dismissed this ian, whose presence considerably op-. him, though he knew not why, than d Ellen into his study. Surely every aware of the awe ever felt by the particularly, by an introduction into nctum sanctorum of a friend possesswer over their destiny! How many have palpitated with indefinable ons of hope, fear, or anger, as their approached the redoubted door! w many have returned from it with d smiles, or with their evil presentipainfully confirmed! Ellen, however. had no fears in entering the little apar 2. ment, since it had been her constant and favourite resort from infancy; there she had drawn new treasures each day from the cabinet of literature, there she had always found her kind friend ready to instruct, to cherish her; and now, although she guessed the reason of her being there, and involuntarily trembled with agitation, vet she could scarcely be said to fear, since she felt assured Mr. Vernon would not nnnecessarily oppose her happiness. It was, therefore, without surprise that she listened. while he informed her of Hargrave's demand. "I have every reason to believe, my dear Ellen," he continued, " from whas I have observed, that you love our young friend, and consequently my consent to your union is given with unfeigned satisfaction. May you, my love, be as happy as I wish you to be!"

He kissed her as he spoke, and she threw herself into the rector's willing arms, and solbed out her love and gratitude. "But, indeed, sir," she said, as soon as she could command her voice, "I cannot leave you. I should never be happy knowing you were all alone. Besides, Mr. Hargrave is used to live in a sphere so far above me, that I fear I should make him blush for my ignorance."

"Fear not, my dear, on that account; and as to your first objection, I foresee that is not insurmountable, and we will speak to Hargrave about it. Now let us join him, by this time he must have returned."

Hargrave had been out all the afternoon, determined to avoid all collision with his friend; but when the evening drew on, and he concluded Mr. Edmonds must long since have departed, he returned to the cottage; and, on entering the parlour, where lights, with

The bubbling and loud histing um, already waited for Ellen and Mr. Vernon, he impatiently paced the floor. A very few minutes elapsed ere they joined him, when

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when Mr. Vernon, leading the timid, shrinking Ellen forward, placed her hand in that of her lover, who started forward to receive the boon: he said, "I delegate the happiness of this dear child to you, Hargrave, in the hope that you will be her protector and support, when I am rendered incapable, by death, of affording her the care she will ever require. Remember, if you do not do your duty by her, the punishment of the orphan's Omnipotent Father will surely fall upon you!"

As Hargrave bent over, and, with fervour, pressed his lips on the snowy forehead of his prize, and murmured something about gratitude and eternal fidelity, his cheek flushed, it might be with pleasure or surprise; but, from whatever cause his confusion arose, it mattered not, since it was probably unmarked, or, if perceived, attributed by Mr. Vernon to the former.

Happiness seemed to reign in the little dwelling, for Hargrave was intoxicated

with delight, his wit sparkled, his love shone forth in all its unrestrained warmth, and every other thought but the present was banished. Ellen, the beautiful Ellen, was his, and he thought himself the most envied of mortals! Ellen received and returned his tenderness with a confidence emanating from her love, her gentleness, and her purity of mind; while Mr. Vernon witnessed with infinite satisfaction their mutual happiness.

A long esteemed female friend of the rector's was prevailed upon to leave her strict retirement in a neighbouring hamlet, where she had been stationary for years, to watch over and guide her young favourite until the moment should arrive for her to give her hand and faith to the impassioned Hargrave.

Mrs. Greville was a maiden lady, who, having been deprived by sudden death of the object of her affections on the eve of their union in early life, had determined

never again to submit her widowed a constant heart to the chance of simil au Thus, although solicitations had trials. not been wanting, since at that time she was young, rich, and pretty, she had refused them all; and when, in after years, unforeseen misfortunes had deprived her of great part of her property, she had retired into the country, where she had passed her time in acts of charity, and was looked upon with love and veneration by her poorer neighbours, and with esteem by those few who called her friend. lady, Ellen found an inestimable companion during the short time that intervened before she changed her name, a time which was wafted away on the light downy pinions of the blind and treacherous God. Every day added pleasures to the sweet communion of the lovers: with his elegant companion leaning on his arm, Hargrave strolled for hours unconscious that aught breathed but himself and the fair being

whose sweet voice seemed, in his ear, the most delightful melody, and whose eyes, as they met his, beamed with happiness and love. Often as her light form bounded to his side after a temporary separation, and she lavished her soft endearments upon him, he half doubted if his exquisite sensations were not too intoxicating to warrant reality; whether he were, indeed, the betrothed husband of the creature of light before him. He would gaze upon her as upon an idol, until his name, coupled with an endearing epithet, and pronounced in a thrilling tone of affection, would recal him from his glowing imaginings, and he would load her with caresses. He had no sooner been made acquainted with Ellen's desire to remain at Claybrook, than he immediately acquiesced with the greatest solicitude for her comfort; but he took that opportunity of mentioning the obligation he was ander of spending some part of every year with his old relation, from whom he expected his increase of fortune; which, afternia his sacrifice, she could not object to.

These obstacles removed, everything look and bright, and they saw, or would only seems happiness, above, below and around them.

What a picture of bliss! what ideascastles did not Hargrave's heated fanc create! while love! love! love! filled u = cach hour! He retired to rest to dream = his mistress, and again rose to repeate the pleasing game, which had made the previous day fly so quickly.

Thus passed a month—the probationar—month which was necessary for the marriag—preparations,—the arrangements are conclused; the elegant, but neat, unostentations—trousseau completed; the presents befitting—one lover to offer, and the other to accept—are made, and the last evening is arrived, before the day which is to seal the lot of each youthful hand and heart, until the scythe of time shall sever the existence of one, or both. For some time they conversed

cheerfully, but by degrees, from various causes, all became grave; Mr. Vernon sat in his elbow chair with his hands clasped upon his breast, pondering on the relinquishment of his adopted child to the care of another; of his satisfaction in seeing her suitably provided for ere he was called to his great account, and he omitted not, during his meditations, to offer up many fervent prayers to Heaven for her welfare.

Mrs. Greville mused on by-gone days, when, like her young friends, fortunate love made everything put on a smiling appearance, so soon, alas! to be clouded by death! Ellen bent silently over her work-frame to conceal the tears of agitation, which now and then trickled down her cheek as she thought of the coming trial; and her lover, unlike his ordinary manner, looked gloomy, while a frown passed rapidly over his brow, and an occasional start, as of pain, was observable from time to time. From this reverie he was

roused by Ellen laying her hand lightly on his arm, and saying, in a low tone, "What is the matter, dear Hargrave? You are out of spirits to-night."

He started, and while he endeavoured to banish his dejection, he replied, "How can I be cheerful, my Ellen, when I see you sad? I see your tears flow, and I cannot but sympathise, and fear, however fond, I may still be unworthy your affection."

Ellen smiled reproachfully, "Did you not promise me, yesterday, you would not let me hear any more on that subject, or see those heavy frowns, which alike frighten and distress me?"

"True, dearest, and if I may venture again to tender my broken word, I will shew you I can keep it better."

"In that hope, I believe," replied she,
"I must pardon you. Come, my grandfather wants you to read a little to him."

The thoughtful vein of the party being now broken, the evening was ended happily.

CHAPTER XI.

I gave away the bride—
Gave the dear youth what kings could not have given.
Then bless'd them both, and put my trust in heaven.
BLOOMFIELD.

The momentous morning arrived, the wedding day dawned, and with it the renewed agitation of the bride. Her whole frame trembled so violently that she was obliged, more than once, during the operations of the toilet, to desist for a few minutes; but, at length, just before nine o'clock, the hour appointed for the ceremony to take place, she was pronounced by her friend, Mrs. Grenville, to be completely ready; and she fortunately had a short interval

entered to conduct her to the church, whice stood close to the cottage. The rose and the lily might have been proud to behold the beautiful girl assimilated with them, for she was habited in a dress of the pure white, simply, but beautifully, embroidered, a half-blown blush-rose graced a bosom scarcely less fair than itself, while a Frence has lace veil, the gift of her betrothed, we thrown over her guileless head, and partially concealed behind its ample folds the anxiety but not the beauty, of its mistress.

Her guardian now entered, and, after having tenderly embraced her, led her from the room, and conducted her through the little gate into the church-yard. As they entered the sacred edifice, where Mr. Vernon himself was to perform the ceremony, the portal was thronged by the villagers—by those who had known Ellen from childhood, those who had tasted her bounty, and felt her goodness; and many were the blessings

called down upon her as she passed. But she raised not her head in acknowledgment, and clung to the arm of the rector yet more closely.

But now she stands beside Hargrave at the altar, and the vows are pronounced by the former, in a firm, clear voice; and by the latter, in a scarcely audible one. When Hargrave, however, attempted to place the ring on the hand of the half-fainting girl, it was observed that his tremelous movement gave the lie to his voice, and the holy emblem of their faith dropped and rung shrilly on the pavement. All started, and Mrs. Greville stooped hastily, and returned it to the bridegroom, whose involuntary trepidation was now undisguised. Mr. Vernon, notwithstanding his efforts to be calm, could scarcely proceed, several times he cleared his voice, and once he raised his handkerchief to remove the moisture which dimmed his sight, before he reached the conclusion of the service. He then stepped forward to 256

embrace his adopted child, but, ere he could gain the spot where she stood, Ellen had fallen insensible into the arms of her husband. After a few minutes, spent in restoring her to consciousness, Hargrave carried, rather than led, her from the church; and they had hardly passed from under the roof of the sacred edifice, when one long loud cheer was raised. Flowers were showered from the hand of almost every parishioner, and if all the hopes and good wishes, which that day were formed, could have been realised. Mr. and Mrs. Hargrave would indeed have been favoured. A radiant smile beamed on Ellen's pale countenance, as she lifted her head, and for an instant looked upon the groups around her, where every face bespoke the interest they felt in their young benefactress. Their sight of her was transient, for the cottage was soon regained. and she sought in her own room the composure which she so much required.

Several days glided away in a species of

dreamy delight, resembling a glassy stream;

80 calm the waters seem to stray, And yet they glide like happiness away.

But those felicitous days, which in effect seemed too unmixed with alloy to endure long, these days having been extended to a month, Hargrave began to think of quitting the rural shade for a while. His departure was a trial to the young wife, who had not anticipated so early a separation, and who had also indulged the hope of accompanying him in his temporary excursions. That idea, however, was soon crushed, since, two evenings before the day on which he had announced he intended to leave her, as they were seated together with Mr. Vernon on a bench in the garden, be said, "My Ellen's eloquent eyes tell me how much she reproaches me for not taking her with me on this journey, but her wish will cease, I know, when I tell her it is for my advantage that I request her to behind."

"Can you mention any thing I w not resign for you, dear?" replied tenderly pressing his hand which she in her's.

"Scarcely, I believe; and that convice makes me, perhaps, more bold in prefer another petition, the greatest I have ventured upon, my own little wife, sin received the gift of yourself; yet, what tell you that also will conduce to our full happiness, I feel confident of your accessence."

"You are right," returned his wife, "know you can command anything in power, and I am sure you would not what I should be unwilling or unable to cord; therefore, let me know how to gryou; you can depend on my doing as wish."

"You are ever kind, my Ellen," retu Hargrave, fondly; "and I will no le circumstances exist, which conspire to make it necessary that our union should be kept secret a few months, and I hope you will consent to remain unknown, at present. I——"

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Vernon, in a tone of surprise, not unmixed with displeasure. "What! not acknowledge your wife! Surely, Mr. Hargrave, such is not your intention?"

"My heart acknowledges her, Mr. Vernon," replied the young man, "and it is solely for her sake, and that of her children, should we be blessed with any, that I require this concealment."

"You must explain yourself, Mr. Hargrave, I must know the reasons for this."

"You shall, sir; I do not wish to be disingenuous, and it is perfectly just you should expect an explanation. The relation, whose heir I have ever considered week, is old and eccentric, and I fear,

were he to take it into his head to a will before I have a son, he might c his mind, and bequeath his property t ther more extensive branch of his fa therefore, until the birth of a s entreat you and Ellen to indulge this wish."

"Such a demand is unaccountable the rector, "and your friend mu strange indeed."

"True, dear sir, but such is the Were it not for Ellen's good, I wou name the circumstance, since I do not for myself. I know what a materi ference it will make to her, if things happen as I mentioned; still, I will a my marriage, and in so doing risk thing, if you desire it. Speak, dear and say what you think of my reques

"I think," replied Ellen, mildly, it is my duty, as well as my wish, every thing for your comfort and I know nothing about the affairs of

you speak; but, as you say it will be of consequence to you to postpone my introduction to your relation, I should deem myself selfish to refuse, and therefore willingly agree to the proposition."

"You know not how much I am your debtor, dearest," answered Hargrave, affectionately caressing her. "I promise you, you shall not lose by your compliance. It now only remains for us to remove Mr. Vernon's objections, which I hope are already weakened." As he spoke, he turned to the rector, who, during Ellen's speech, had been plunged in a reverie.

Hargrave's wish had not only astonished, but alarmed, him: he scarcely knew why, awindefinable dread crept over him; but he saw he had gone too far to recede, he knew no one in the great world to whom he could apply for information or advice, and, perhaps, from a natural timidity of character, he shrank from raising the veil of mystery which appeared to hang over

after a moment's hesitation, by expression himself still unsatisfied with the proposition; yet, as Hargrave assured him that Ellen's happiness was at stake, and she had already promised compliance, appearing entirely satisfied, he would consent, can condition of the disclosure of the marriage being deferred only until they had a child. This stipulation was readily agreed to, and the subject was soon forgotten, amidst the superlative anxiety of Hargrave's absence, which, he assured Ellen, should be as short as possible, though he either could not, or would not, determine its duration.

She was thus left in her solitude, to ponder at leisure over the delightful, but surprising, nay, almost incomprehensible, events which had rapidly followed each other the last three months. During that time, every thing had seemed a whirl—a dream. It had been a season of such unexpected happiness that, when she looked

around and missed her fond husband, she was almost tempted to ask herself if she were really married,—whether she were indeed the adored wife of Mr. Hargrave, or only the victim of delusion! In a short time, however, this feeling wore off, she received the most tender letters from her husband, and she was thus enabled to support the tedium inflicted by his protracted return.

CHAPTER XII.

How many in the married state we find Wedded in person, but divorced in mind. Mezentius chained the living to the dead. Unnatural union, which has horror bred Though but one victim suffered by the chair, While wedlock gives to two an equal pain.

MARRIAGE. ULD POEM.

AGAIN we shift the scene, and carry our kind readers to the busy city. It is into a small, elegantly furnished room, in a house in Grosvenor Place we would introduce them, and, casting around them the veil of invisibility, request them to observe What passes in the chamber.

The open window admitted the balmy air of a May morning, circulating through the

apartment, loaded with the fragrancy of various hot-house plants, which occupied several stands. Around were seen many little articles of taste, such as marquetrie cabinets, inlaid tables, antique china, &c... while a piano and harp seemed to indicate that harmony was no slight favourite with the fair owner. She was seated close to the latter instrument, the strings of which she from time to time struck, but with a look of so much abstraction that it was apparent her thoughts did not accord with her employment; and in a few minutes she quitted her position, and, approaching a table, on which was scattered a profusion of billets of divers colours, intermingled with invitation and visiting cards, while a silver ink-stand and writing implements claimed their place also, she indited a few lines with a listless air. But this effort failed to amuse; and, laying the pen aside, the sunk into a large chair, and began to pull a rose, which she gathered, to pieces.

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While so engaged and deeply rumia loud knock at the street door her, and a slight increase of cold visible on her cheek, as she heard known foot on the stairs. The door and the servant ushered Captain into her presence. He entered sparkling eye, and, placing a bou choice flowers on the table beside he as he pressed the delicate shand he to him, "I hope you are not ill, no Mrs. Hamilton, your absence last from my mother's, made us fear su the case."

"Mrs. Sinclair is very kind," repli Hamilton, "to think about me, I fears were groundless, as I really a well. The truth is, I was not in s go out last evening, and had I c her party, I should only have be stupid."

"Impossible, Maria, you are leverywhere."

- "I should have forfeited my character then, if such be your opinion," replied Mrs. Hamilton, with a smile. "I intend, however, to see your mother to-day, and hope to make my peace with her,"
- "I can promise that being soon effected, for where are you not omnipotent?"

Maria turned a deaf ear to this speech, as well as a wilful blindness to the look which accompanied it; saying, hastily, "Have you seen Lady Scarsdale, since she was at Almack's?"

- "No, but I heard that she was going abroad directly."
- "Indeed! from whom had you that news?"
- "From Lady Cransted:—but, by the bye, shall I see you at the Opera, to-night?"
- "I think not, Charles dines at home, and you know he hates music, and I will not leave him at home alone."
- "You are too good to him, Mrs. Hamilton; he would not stay at home for you."

"besides, I dare say he would indu in the same way, were I to ask it."

"I am glad you think so," replivisiter, with a pitying look. "Still lyou might get away by ten o'clock. haps he may go out by that time."

"Well, I shall see, your mother h promise of the box to-night, you kno you go with her."

"Certainly, but I do not mean t unless you come."

"Nonsense: I do not think I she dulge you, to punish your want of gal to your mother; you ought to remain her sake."

"If you are really determined to cruel, I shall not conclude my visi-

any I like so well: come. I am sure your harp is conveniently placed for my request."

As he spoke he rose and commenced turning over her music-book.

"It is quite out of tune," she replied; besides, I have a cold."

"A sudden one, Maria; you said just how you were quite well. However, I am not one to require any thing which you dislike, so withdraw my suit."

She coloured deeply, as he turned with an air of pique to take up his hat, and to cover which she moved to the harp, saying, with a laugh, as she struck a prefatory chord, "Spoilt children must always be humoured, it seems, and I believe you soldiers are just like them."

"I will be like anything to please you, Maria," said the young officer, as he stood by her side, all attention.

The song was scarcely concluded, and he expressed his gratification, when another knock announced fresh visiters; and Sin-

that means represent his stopes of seeing term in the eventury affirms, as he laid his name in the limits of the door, "But at case, you are in the Fancy Pair, in the Resears Fair, in the Research Fair, in

Perhaps are year roing? He bowd sortnessence, and quitted the room, with an are 16 student satisfaction, to give place to a loss 16 arguintance; during whose man, it may not be amiss to explain the causes which had led to the foregoing scene.

Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton, as we proviously intimated, made Ireland their residence during the winter which followed their alliance. Lord Fitz Eustace, happy in the achievement of his wishes, appeared the kindest of fathers-in-law; and it would indeed have been strange if the young people had not felt perfectly contented. All that they could demand, or that money could furnish, was theirs. Charles, at that time was, at least, an attentive, if not a

tender, husband, and the amiable Maria was happy. A mutual esteem existed between them, which supplied the want of other feelings, and Maria, both from duty and inclination, yielded, in many instances, to her more selfish partner, with that delightful grace which was natural to her; being a quality men so seldom know how to equal, much less to excel in the female character. The early spring found them in the metropolis, where they were at first deeply engaged in the mysteries and vexations of their new establishment. Grosvenor Place was selected as the spot for their residence; and, at the commencement of the season, they were installed in their new abode, which, for the taste and elegance of its decorations, was surpassed by few. Mrs. Hamilton's equipage was remarkable for its handsome, though unostentatious, *pearance; while its fair owner was admired and courted by all, for her peculiar attractions.

At first, Charles, flattered and plea by the novelty of his situation, was a everywhere in his lady's presence, and world asserted that Mr. and Mrs. Ha ton were a truly happy couple. The weeks, however, before they departed Merton Hall, where they passed the s mer, he partly relapsed into his old ha of gratifying himself, without consider her so much as he had done. But might arise from the length of the sea which had been unusually protracted, from a satiety of pleasure. Each su quent month unfortunately proved, 1 strongly, that his selfishness was again suming its empire over him, and that complaisance he had shown, immedia after his marriage, was on the wane. no appearance of discomfort was vis on the part of either; Maria concil him as usual, and frequently with the success, though Charles's indifference dually increased, and he followed his pursuits, in general, without consulting his wife; who, a high-spirited girl, never let it appear that she, in any degree, felt the neglect she frequently experienced the following year. No one was taken into her confidence—no one would have suspected, from her behaviour, that she was other than a happy wife.

It is but too often the custom for married people to appear separately in public, therefore Mrs. Hamilton's being frequently alone elicited no surprise, except what arose from the difference of the former season. This, however, was only remarked by a few, and was quickly forgotton in a gay world, where a circumstance must be of great importance to excite surprise a third day. Another thing, which tended to make him more careless, was the absence of any immediate prospect of family, which was an object of great solicitude to both families, from the expectation of the title which descended to the younger Hamilton. Maria

sorrowed in secret over this disappointment which she felt was combining, with oth causes, to rob her of the limited portion affection she had commanded from husband.

During this time, they kept a great de of company, and their parties, ever bril ant and recherché, were eagerly sought their numerous acquaintance, at which ti Charles always appeared to advantage, sit he then assumed the tone and manner be ting his matrimonial character. These te porary fits of attention made Maria me sensible of the coldness of his ordina conduct; but, while in the midst of a co stant round of engagements, she was able ward off her distress at his estrangeme It is true he seldom refused her any thi she desired, or treated her with harshner but it was the frigidity of manner, the wa of interest, of kindness, which affected M Hamilton; and which, notwithstanding I attempts to overcome, still existed.

part was a difficult one to sustain for a great length of time; and, in spite of her endeavours to the contrary, her unrequited tenderness decreased, and with it the poignancy of her regret at the appearance of the fatal means of its destruction. She ceased to remark Mr. Hamilton's absence with her former uneasiness, though duty made her still attentive to him when able to be so, and sought—and, in seeking, found, amusement and solace in other objects.

The wheel of time revolves, bearing with it the destinies of this ill-fated pair; and mother year had flown—making but little alteration in their sentiments; though, in Charles's behaviour, another change was wrought. He would sometimes forsake his home for weeks, to visit France or Scotland, where he would watch over the declining health of Lord Glenartney. These excursions, together with his shooting expeditions to the moors, employed him until his wife's return to London with her father, at whose

Irish domain she had been staying the whole summer; while Charles pursued his own amusement in England, only devoting a few weeks at a time to trips over to see Mrs. Hamilton, to whom an appearance of affection, at least, was due. While these visit lasted, Maria observed that an augmenter gloom appeared to have fastened itself of her husband, which she deplored, but knew not how to remove, since to all her enquirie he gave her no satisfactory answer.

Again the spring commenced, and again they trod the path of pleasure, as before sometimes together, but more frequently apart. Charles entered into every dissepation—was often absent when morning dawned—days would elapse without he meeting Maria for an hour, except in a ciety; he seemed, indeed, to avoid bein alone with her. And she, having her of employments, now little heeded his absent

Lively, fascinating, and fashionable, M Hamilton was equally the object of pi

admiration, and dislike. The former feeling was excited in the breasts of those who considered the dangerous position in which she was placed by her husband; almost unguarded in the midst of a false, designing world, ever ready to judge ill of the most innocent, the most virtuous. The second was felt by many from different causessome admired her numerous excellent qualities; some her consideration,—her rank; but most of the male part of her acquainlance found in her a charm, of which admiration faintly expressed the aroused feeling: while dislike was the offspring of those little minds, which can not see another more beautiful, or more pleasing, than themselves without anger. Every where she was surrounded by numbers who paid the homage her superior claims seemed to demand:—her box at the opera was the resort of a set of young and fashionable men;—her drawingmom their lounge; -- while in the park or the gardens, they hovered around her like thoughtless insects, attracted by the my of a light; while she stood firm and up moved in the centre, diffusing pleasure and satisfaction to each. As long as the many sought and obtained her smiles, the danger of her position was alight, for all was no longer a novice to the gaieties to society; she knew how to appreciate the words and actions of men of the world; all was a woman of strong and well-grounde principles; and she pursued her stead course amidst the dazzle of her career, not withstanding the unwarrantable negligence of her husband.

But, now, a new courtier was about to be added to her list, and one far less in different than the rest. Frederic Sinclais was enabled, in consequence of a feweeks' leave of absence, to enter in many of the amusements of the period, at thus soon saw Mrs. Hamilton. They met old friends; they met with mutual satisfaction, and each feeling perfectly justification.

in a renewed acquaintance; now that Maria was no longer free, they never turned a thought upon the hazardous game they were going to play. The previous year, Sinclair's ancle had had the misfortune to lose his only son, which had so greatly affected him that he only survived the shock a few months. His nephew had ever been a great favourite with him; it was, accordingly, a matter of 40 surprise to find, on inspection, that by his will he had left Frederic a legacy of twenty thousand pounds, besides his estate in De-Vonshire, after the life-time of his widow. This unexpected good fortune enabled Frederic to place his beloved mother in the sphere he had scarcely dared hope ever to have the power or means of doing; and This happy son had her constantly with him, and the delight, the satisfaction, of repaying her the devotion he had experienced in his youth. The young officer was not long in finding his way to Grosvenor Place, where be was most cordially received by Charles,

as well as Maria; for, having no longer any object to compete for, the former welcomed him to his house and table with pleasure. Consequently, day after day, the Captain joined Mrs. Hamilton at various places of public resort, where the gay and the idle congregate for employment or pastime. He was constantly at her side, was her most privileged-most constant, guest. Her form was soon the first and sole object he sought, whether in the morning or evening entertainment; and, unconsciously, her presence afforded him all the brilliancy of the scene. Imprudent man! thus to bask in the radiance of an orb, the effulgence of which prevents you from observing the gulf which yawns beneath! Weeks passed away and found him still an attendant at her daily levees, still a licensed intruder at all times; but it found him not with the same unshackled feelings he had approached her with at first. Pity was associated with a ten derer sentiment; for, during his many opportunities of being at her house, added to his observation in public, he failed not to discover that Mr. Hamilton did not treat her with that affection which she so eminently deserved. He could not fail to deprecate the husband, when he discovered this, or pity the object of his neglect; and from the pity insensibly emanated feelings akin to be awakened love.

Maria, meanwhile, began to feel restless and uneasy, though she scarcely knew why; she was dejected when alone, and therefore naturally sought society, where she was equally brilliant, equally distingué, but not equally happy as before. Her husband had absented himself much from home; and, when he returned, was so gloomy in her presence, and callous to her attempted kindness, that it required some resolution to bear his unkindness. Thus rendered unhappy, it is not surprising that she derived much pleasure from her acquaintance with Captain Sinclair, whose easy manners and

delicate attentions conveyed an inconce; able, but hazardous, gratification to he though, up to the present moment, she ha not detected the origin of her uneasy feeings, or even taken alarm at them: happil; however, the period was not far distar when her eyes were to be opened to he peril—when the event will shew in what manner she conducted herself.

CHAPTER XIII.

It is a busy talking world,
That with licentious breath blows like the wind
As freely on the palace as the cottage.

Slander meets no regard from noble minds; Only the base believe what the base utter.

THE day passed, with Mrs. Hamilton, amidst her usual round of fashionable avocations; and seven o'clock found her waiting dinner for her husband. When he arrived, it was obvious to her that something had arisen to displease him, for he scarcely spoke to her for some time. The conversation flagged during the dinner, but some time after the servants had withdrawn, he abruptly asked whether she were going

- out? She replied in the negative, and instantly rejoined, "I heard you had dered the horses to be harnessed read be put to the carriage by ten o'clock."
- "I did so, Charles, but intended o to make use of it should you go out evening."
- "But suppose I meant to stay at he Maria?"
- "Then, dear Charles, I will ring order the horses put up for the nig replied Maria, with a smile of pleas laying her hand on the handle of the as she spoke in prosecution of her desig
- "Stay, stay, Maria; let me hear whyou intended to go?"
- "To the opera. I half promised I Sinclair to join her party; but since remain here, Charles, I shall be much r gratified in staying with you." She pt the bell, and, on the entrance of the serum. Hamilton said, before she had tim speak, "Johnstone, order the care

round immediately, to take your mistress and myself to the opera."

"But Charles," interposed the astonished Mrs. Hamilton, "you do not like the Opera. Pray do not go on my account."

"May I not go with you if I wish it, Maria?" said the husband, somewhat perishly.

"Certainly; but I feared you were putting force upon your own inclinations, for my amusement."

"Order the carriage, Johnstone," re-iterated Mr. Hamilton in a tone of authority, which was unanswerable, and the man left the room accordingly. "Now, then, you will get ready," he added, turning to his lady, "it is past nine, and you will not be too early."

Mrs. Hamilton retired, not a little at a loss to account for this sudden decision. "How surprised Sinclair will be," thought she, "to see me escorted by Charles." Her ideas thus unconsciously turned towards

one who occupied by far a greater de of interest in her mind than she was a of, or than would have accorded with notions of rectitude, had she probed heart.

As Mrs. Hamilton was handed into box by her husband, she said, gaily, have brought a proselyte with me, . Sinclair, and I hope you will assist n his entire conversion."

"That will be scarcely necessary, dear Mrs. Hamilton, since you have us taken to bring him over to the university opinion, stimulated by the exquisite tof Pasta."

They were now seated, and while Charconversed with Mrs. Sinclair, and at t carelessly spoke to others of the party, captain leant on the back of Mrs. milton's chair, listening with undisguatisfaction to her animated discount to the evening soon drew to a close, after promising to meet her friends in

park on the following day, Maria accompanied her impatient husband to the carriage, in which they were no sooner seated than she kindly hoped that he had not found the evening tedious. Charles acknowledged that he had been more amused than usual, but, as he did not volunteer any conversation, and all her attempts to draw him from his taciturnity proving abortive, some time before they reached Grosvenor Place they had sunk into silence. His evident ill-humour was no novelty, Maria had ever found it the most prudential course, in such cases, to leave him entirely to himself. During the opera she had observed something was wrong, from frequently noticing that she was the object of his frowning scrutiny; but no explanation of his displeasure passed between them, and sleep soon obviated the circumstanes of the evening from her mind.

True to her arrangement, Maria drove to the gardens in the Regent's Park the next atternoon, where she found several of beef acquaintances waiting for her near the entrance, from among whom the reader will not be surprised to hear Frederic started to her side the instant she descended from her carriage. She joined Mrs. Sinclair, and, with that lady and several of her usual fashionable adherents, she perambulated the gay spot for some time. The place soon became extremely crowded; and, having stopped to examine and purchase an article at one of the stalls, she discovered that in the interim her friends had quitted the tent, and that she was alone. She walked on, looking on all sides for the face of one she knew, and in a few minutes recognized Frederic Sinclair, who said, as he approached her through the dense masses of people, "Ah! Mrs. Hamilton, I thought I should find you somewhere in this tent. I have just met an old Indian friend, and stopped to speak to him, by which means I lost you all; but," he continued, as he looked round, "where is my good mother? are you alone?"

"Yes, indeed," replied his fair friend; I have missed her, somehow. I thought, perhaps, you were sent in search of me."

"I expected to find you together," returned Sinclair; "but as you are as unfortunate as myself, I shall find additional pleasure in joining her from being of use to you. Which way shall we proceed?"

"There I am entirely at a loss, Captain Sinclair, but this path affords us as probable a chance as any other."

They turned down it accordingly, and, after a quarter of an hour's walk, Maria determined to return to her carriage; she was, notwithstanding, induced to defer doing so for a few minutes by Sinclair's proposition to remain stationary a little while, in hopes his mother, who was undoubtedly pursuing the same futile object with themselves, might pass. For this purpose, Mrs. Hamilton placed herself on vol. 1.

a seat, and both turned their eyes in evdirection in hopes of meeting with the friends. The bench Maria had selected wa placed in front of a large bush, so thick that nothing could be observed throughit; and she, being at first intent upon the passing objects, did not observe that the voice of some persons on the contrary side an nounced the situation of other seats. The conversation, however, did not regard her and she was too much occupied with her own affairs to pay any attention to the few words which reached her ear; but, when she was silent a few minutes, while the captain advanced two or three paces to have a more extensive view up the walk, she could not avoid hearing a part, at least, of what was said. " But I blame her husband entirely," said one of the party; to which an indistinct answer was returned and again she heard these words: "Hei always with her, paying as much, if no more, attention than her husband ought t

do." At this moment Frederic rejoined her and said, as he sat down, "They are still invisible, so I think we will only wait five minutes longer." He drew out his watch and held it in his hand as they again looked around; their pause made the voices audible, and Maria distinctly caught the next sentence; "I certainly fear, unless Mrs. Hamilton sees her danger soon, the designs of the captain will have proved to be too Powerful for her heart and for ---." heard no more! the boiling tide of blood which mounted to her head appeared to deprive her of the power of understanding; she started, and, as she hastily rose, scarcely k nowing what she did, her eyes were almost unconsciously directed towards her com-Panion: perhaps hoping to discover by his looks if the fatal words had also attracted his attentiou. Our soldier's ears had too truly been saluted by the same unpleasant information, but, with characteristic firmness, he preserved his composure; and,

quitting his seat with an air of carelessness, he now stood beside her, when he could not fail to remark her confusion; yet be retained sufficient command over the muscles of his countenance to prevent her sustaining more annoyance from a discovery of the realization of her fears. "You are now tired of waiting, Mrs. Hamilton, shall I see you to your carriage?" he demanded, with the view of relieving her from her awkward situation. She bowed only, her tongue seemed paralysed, and her tremor was so great that, unwilling as she might be, she was obliged to accept the support of her companion's arm. "I feet you are not well," he said, as they walked onwards, and he felt her whole frame shake.

"Can I get you any thing?"

"No, thank you," she replied with an effort; "I shall be better presently; the heat, I fancy, has been too much for me." No more was said, and in a little time they gained the entrance of the gardens.

where, greatly to her distress, several of her party assembled round her, with numherless inquiries as to where she had been; at the same time detailing in how many places they had sought for her. Sinclair immediately stood forth her champion, and telling them the agitation of having been lest by them, together with the heat and fatigue occasioned by her walk, had considerably indisposed her, and he requested some one to look for the carriage. Sinclair kindly offered to accompany her home, but this she declined, having partly recovered her self-possession, declaring a little rest would soon restore her. young officer handed her to her carriage, and then stood a moment until she drove off, when his bow, if less cordial than usual, was infinitely more profound; and a flash of something like scorn passed rapidly over his manly brow, as he turned and mounted his cabriolet.

As Mrs. Hamilton proceeded home, whi-

ther she had given immediate orders to be driven, she leaned back and endeavoured to compose herself, but her efforts were useless. Indeed, the more she contemplated her late humiliating position, the more she felt crushed. That such a subject should be openly canvassed was agony to her. She tried to reflect, but to no purpose; she fancied every one she met looked upon her with an eye of reproach; and never did she hail her approach to her splendid, but heartless residence, with more unfeigned joy.

Alone in her boudoir, she could retrace the past; she could not even hope Captain Sinclair was unacquainted with the cause of her agitation, since she herself had so plainly heard the odious imputation, and shame dyed her cheek with crimson, while tears of mortification rushed into her eyes at the idea. She wept long and bitterly. She wept from various causes, anger, sorrow, and wounded pride, struggled in her

breast. She was unwilling to believe he had intended to make her miserable by gaining her affections; but, however averse to the unvarnished fact, she was compelled, reluctantly to acknowledge that, if such had been his intention, his attempt had been partly crowned with success; and that she had suffered the citadel of her heart to be invaded. She felt she had not repelled the insidious enemy; had not maintained a vigilant guard to protect her against his attacks, but had weakly permitted him to gain admittance to her strong hold without considering the danger of his so doing: and now she was suddenly and violently apprised of her situation by the harsh voice of a stranger, and awakened to the cruel certainty of its being in the power of the enemy.

Mrs. Hamilton could not disguise from herself that her few weeks' acquaintance with Prederic had renewed feelings which Jears had deadened, and which, owing to

her husband's conduct, had too easily rekindled. "Have I not," thought " permitted this dangerous friend too stant, too uncontrolled, an ingress t house, and allowed him to confer gratification by his society than was sistent with my character? Have I no ceived attentions from him which, others, were alike unmarked and I quited, but at his hands were too tifying? Oh! yes, I see it all now-l my guilty weakness. Oh! how he despise—how he must pity me." she again yielded to her grief for time, when Charles's evident disples the night before crossed her mind. " it possible he could be jealous?" asked herself. Conscience told her might be the case, though most earn did she hope she was mistaken; her fears, once roused, saw evil in circumstance, and produced the alarn he must be suspicious of her part

for Sinclair, since it was noticed by strangers.

Most painfully did she feel the manner in which she had been warned of her error, yet she felt thankful she had not continued longer in ignorance of it, since her penchant had not yet become too scrious for amendment, and she had strength to retrace her steps. Having thus reviewed her conduct and fully deplored it, she threw herself upon her knees, and poured out her prayers and supplications before her Almighty Judge, while tears of penitence fell on her clasped hands.

For a short period no sound was heard in that apartment, save the soft breathing of the noble-minded woman, whose countenance, as she rose, beamed with holy hope, such firm and high resolve, that it was easy to perceive her determination was taken, and that, in knowing her peril, Mrs. Habilton had already half achieved the con-

steps to terrein. Finally, she laid down such a time for the runury as should effectually mentant a recurrence of so mortifying a stratum at the country of the doubted, we hope that she had firmness to carry such had otherwise

Mrs. Hamilton was reased from the train or been monaped into which she had fallen, to the monaped the had seeing that it was six about she recollected that she was congressed to accompany Charles to a conner party. What was to be done? she was remember ready, nor willing, to enter into exclety that evening, yet how to excuse herself to her husband she knew not, consequently, after a moment's hesifation, she decided upon attending him, and even then to commence her great design of self-command.

Thus laudably inclined, she joined the party, and, if her spirits were not so elastic

as usual, she easily accounted for the change, by urging her fatigue, which the pallor of her countenance fully corroborated.

CHAPTER XIV.

Alas! that pang will be severe
Which bids us part to meet no more,
Which tears me far from one so dear,
Departing for a distant shore.

BYRON.

LET us now, for a brief space, follow the dragoon as he drove slowly along with the nonchalance peculiar to gentlemen of his cloth. He was no less startled than Mrs. Hamilton by what he had heard, though he felt infinitely more indignant at the calumny. He acknowledged that he might have been betrayed by the dream of pleasure, into an over-strained attendance in the train of his friend; but his mind re-

Folted from the idea of obtaining undue influence over her affections. He convicted himself of having experienced a dangerous Satisfaction in her society, but had he entertained the most distant idea her happiness was hazarded, no consideration should have prevented his resignation of her acquaintance. "What a blind, weak fool, I have been," thought he, "not to have perceived the abyss towards which I was running headlong! An abyss, also, from which I have already once saved myselfonly it seems to turn round and get still more deeply involved. But means of escape are yet left me-I will fly from temptation and contempt—her contempt—which must necessarilly follow the charge of my evil intentions. Painful as it may be for her to harbour such an opinion of me, it is, perhaps, better for our mutual safety she should not be undeceived; and I must devise some means for obviating the unpleasantness of our frequent meetings. Thank Heaven! I see where my folly carried me, in time to avert its fatal conquences, and I will not shrink from the salutary remedy." Having made these reflections on his way to Kensington Garden where he met several friends, he gave he Tiger the reins, and, accompanying the soon seemed to dismiss this disagreeab subject from his mind.

It was yet early next day, when Mr Sinclair called in Grosvenor Place, anxion to hear how Mrs. Hamilton was, and shad scarcely satisfied herself of the in provement of her health, when she hasten to inform her that she had every reason fear her son's regiment was, immediate to be removed to Ireland.

"He seems charmed with the prosper pursued the mother, "and, though I can say I have so enthusiastic an idea of Irish residence, I am rejoiced to see h contented to leave his country again."

"But Ireland, my dear madam," :

Maria, "is so near, that you may easily accompany captain Sinclair, and, if you wish to hear a pleasing picture of my father land, I can draw you such an one as will almost make you decide upon going."

"Oh! I have no repugnance to any removal with my Frederic;" returned Mrs. Sinclair, smiling, "we are willing to make any sacrifice for those we love; he it is who wishes me to stay among my friends, though I tell him, to watch over him, and administer to his happiness, is "my being's aim and end."

"Of course you will leave us then, Mrs. Sinclair?"

"Probably; as he will, undoubtedly, Concede the point, knowing how anxious I am not to lose his society. As soon as I know we are to go; for certain, I will let you know. Frederic is now gone to the Horse Guards. Shall I see you at Mrs. B-'s to-night?"

"No," replied Mrs. Hamilton, "I could

not accept her invitation, from a previous engagement with a friend of my husband. "Well, then, I will tell Frederic to come and let you know—but I must beg you excuse a short visit, my dear Mrs. Hamitton, for I have an appointment at our o'clock; but I could not resist the temptation of ascertaining, personally, how you were, after your fatigue, and of telling you

this troublesome Irish business."

Compliments and leave-taking terminate the visit, and Maria was left to think on the news she had heard, which afforded both pleasure and pain. The former from the prospect of being spared the annoyand of meeting the captain much longer, and the latter from finding that he considered is complimentally considered in the latter from finding that he considered attempt. "No doubt," she argued to herself, "he discovers it is advisable to fly now he is unmasked, and I hope, both for his sake and mine, we may meet no more my duties are difficult ones, and I must tak

care I am not again tempted from their harsh, but virtuous, performance."

Several days passed without Mrs. Hamilton seeing Frederic, for although he called for the sake of appearance, it was at such time when she was most likely to be from home; he also persuaded his mother to write to Maria, instead of his paying her a visit, to inform her of their speedy departure; and he succeeded in avoiding her in society, until the day previous to that on which he was to quit London. His mother had frequently expressed surprise at his not going to Mr. Hamilton's so often as formerly, to which he pleaded his variety of employment before leaving England.

On the last day, however, he coincided with her in thinking he was under the necessity of calling to take leave, and accordingly set out, about one o'clock, for the house where he had spent so many delightful, but, unpropitious hours for his peace. All his former pleasurable sensa-

tions were now destroyed-justly annih. lated—and his actual feelings concentrat€ into a firm resolution to act as his duty, = his conscience, pointed out. His natura powers of mind had already enabled hi to crush that interest, which he had four lurking in his heart, for the fascinatic Mrs. Hamilton—he had discovered, upc inspection, that her image was like a fung∎ in a noble mansion, which, once rootemakes its rapid, but unseen, ravages, I every direction, and, if not discovered am exterminated permanently, will, ere long sap the very foundations, until the fabr becomes worthless, and falls, irretrievabl_ to decay.

Thus Sinclair, in fancied security, has permitted Maria to engage his thoughts until she had insensibly entwined hersel around his heart, in a manner to endange his well-being, until the door of conviction was opened, and he saw the destructive poison. Then, like a good workman, he

struck instantly at the origin of the evil, and effectually eradicated it; not, certainly, without an effort. No! the wound might, for a time, be tender—the struggle for mastery be great—but the salve of rectitude must soothe the first, while virtue must support and encourage the last.

With genuine, honourable, upright, and steady intentions, he resolved to meet Mrs. Hamilton as usual, to prevent, if possible, the awkwardness which would probably attend his visit, and, by so doing, benefit Thus prepared, Captain Sinclair mounted the steps, and applied his hand to the knocker of No. ----, Grosvernor Place; not without a secret hope, it must be acknowledged, that Mrs. Hamilton might not be at home. The door opened, and his hope vanished, for the array of domestics convinced him it was fallacious, and he followed his conductor, not with his usual elasticity, but with the heavy step of dogged determination.

The drawing-room was void, and his sum moned courage was unavailing; he walke to the window as the servant retired to ia form his mistress of his arrival, and gazvacantly on the opposite view of St. James Park. At another time, he had not hesitate to invade her boudoir; but now the cawas altered. His quality he felt to be the of a common acquaintance, and, as suc he must wait her appearance. A light sta was heard approaching—he turned mech nically, and Maria entered, pale, calm, and dignified, yet courteous. He looked at her & most with astonishment; he expected, at lea≤ some embarrassment, some shew of feelin but no! all was composed, and he instant hailed the circumstance with satisfaction affording assistance to his conduct. took his cue from her, and adopted a simils The visit was prolonged muc manner. beyond the period either had believe would have been possible; for, in a ver

few minutes, each acquired confidence in themselves, and in the other, and conversed with the ease, though not the unreserve, of their former acquaintance: perhaps, also, each dreaded the struggle of the last moment for their still recently formed resolutions; but delay availed not; half an hour had elapsed, and Frederic rose to take his leave. Maria's countenance underwent a momentary change as she gave her hand, which was so cold that her visiter could scarcely refrain from a start. It was like the collision of fire with ice, for he felt in a raging fever.

The parting was hasty, but in character with their distant behaviour, and both felt, as the house door closed behind Frederic, that a great and fearful conquest over self had been maintained and effected with credit and satisfaction.

The Captain stepped forward with his usual quickness and agility, under the influence of that contentment which the sense of having acted rightly ever confers. One

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week from that period found him an inhabitant of the "gem of the ocean," where, for the present, we will leave him to the delectable employment of Still-hunting, White Boys, &c. &c.

CHAPTER XV.

- For man, to man So oft unjust, is always so to woman.

BYRON.

MRS. HAMILTON exerted herself much for some days to shake off the anxiety which had arisen from the late painful discovery; and, although suffering bodily and mentally, contrived to conceal from those around her the existence of a grief, which was sensibly augmented by her husband's frequent harshness, still more felt from this time, as he gradually confined himself more to home the remainder of the time they stayed in town. That might comprehend a space of two months, during which he generally with her into company, with the view, fancied, of watching her, though she ha reason to form such an opinion from language. Frequently peevish, irrit and tyrannical, he yet never insulted he avowing any jealousy; and she was able to cope with his ill-temper, from having been changing for the worse many months past, though on what acc she was ignorant.

When Charles formerly pursued his pleasures, she had seen so little of him she had not felt, and consequently had paid much attention to his indiffetemper. Now the case was otherwise; she had many little trials to endure, we called all her forbearance, and naw sweetness of disposition, into action.

August now approached, and all were able began to leave London. and Mrs. Hamilton repaired to a villa the former had purchased on the ban

hames, near Henley; and for some weeks ntinued to enjoy apparently the relief of by the change of scene. His wife's ss seemed to have worked favourably his mind, and she was encouraged to I in her wish to render him more affec-

From this state of comparative hapin his society, she was suddenly diverted inforseen event, which in one moment the scarcely tasted cup from her lips, for she had so long pined, so long struggled. was sitting alone one morning, when a t entered, and, to her infinite surprise, ted directions relative to the packing master's clothes.

acking Mr. Hamilton's clothes!" she

s, ma'am, you have the key of the room the portmanteau is, which master always when he travels."

it I know nothing of his going away, one: what induces you to think he is?" om my master ordering me, ma'am, to clothes sufficient for a fortnight, imme.
7. Do you not know, ma'am, that Thomas e to take a place in the coach?"

DL. I. P

- "No, indeed, I did not, Johnstone;" replai Maria, rising quickly. "Where is Mr. Hand ton?"
 - " In his dressing-room, ma'am."
- "Very well—here is the key to get the portmanteau," she said, as she left the apartment to learn the occasion of so sudden a removal. She encountered her husband as she was on her way to his room, and instantly accosted him, saying "Are you really going away today, Charles?"
- "Ah, Maria! I was coming to tell you, I must go to town directly. This letter, which I have just received, relates to business of the greatest importance, which must be attended to. You must get some one to stay with you for I shall not be back for some days."

They had now entered the library, and Massaid, "Surely the business cannot prevent yreturning here at night, Charles; there so coaches both early and late, besides, there the carriage."

"I rather think I shall have to go beyo! London; therefore, certainly, cannot return t night, Maria. Very likely, also, I may take t! present opportunity of paying Lord Glenartney his yearly visit; but, of this, I can inform you byletter; so do not expect me before you seeme."

"Charles," said Mrs. Hamilton mildly, but sorrowfully; "you cannot deceive me; I am sure you are not going on business only. You are meditating leaving me in the way you did last year."

"You are unjust, Maria; when you see this letter, which I assure you is the sole cause of my journey."

"I must believe you, replied Mrs. Hamilton; "but I feared, as you had ordered Johnstone to pack so many things, that you were likely to be absent a long time."

The cheek of her husband was overspread by a momentary paleness, as he replied, "Your fears are your bane, I believe, Mrs. Hamilton—always aroused before there is any occasion. Suppose I did give such directions; is that any reason I should be thus importuned? Heaven knows! my home is unpleasant enough without being obliged to stay in it for ever, or required to give an account of my intended proceedings, which, in the present instance, I cannot, being ignorant of them myself."

Maria's countenance fell; she saw farther remonstrance was useless, and she turned asic to conceal a tear, which swam in her eye, is consequence of this speech; perhaps the modirect avowal of his sentiments, which he ever passed his lips. Selfish as he was, he heart smote him for his unkindness, when signify enquired where she should write to him and he rejoined in a softened tone, "You maddirect to Ibbotson's, if you have any thing say before you hear from me; which I think not likely, as you shall certainly know sow whether I go on to Scotland."

"Of course you will sleep in Grosvenor Place Charles: the person there will get every this ready, if you only let her know in time, as you can sit in the back parlour."

"Oh no; I shall not go there, Maria; € hotel is the best place for me, and L mean go to one while I stay in town."

At this moment the servant entered to set that the coach would be at the door in firminutes; and Mr. Hamilton demanded if he portmanteau were ready.

"It will be, sir, by that time," replied the

"Get my great coat, Johnstone, for me to take, and bring my hat and gloves."

The man withdrew to obey, and Maria said, "Have you every thing you want, Charles?"

"Yes, I think so." He appeared to consider a moment; then looking at her, and seeing she still regarded him wishfully, he said, as he kissed her kindly, nay even fondly, "You almost make me wish this letter had not come, Maria, although it has afforded me much pleasure, by apprising me of an event to which I have looked forward with anxiety."

"Let me, then, hope, dear Charles, that such feling may hasten your return."

"Undoubtedly it shall; I wish necessity did not call me away. Good-bye; I hear the coach; will write before long." He pressed her had, looked at her again with an affection she had seldom experienced, in which glance, however, there was mingled an unaccountable wildness Mrs. Hamilton did not understand, and then left the room.

After having wished him farewell, Maria stood still in the place he had left her, and lent an attentive ear to the rattle of the coach

steps, as they were put up; the declosed with a slam: "All's right," wa by several voices in different keys, vehicle departed. Maria sunk on t and wept, it might be difficult to say freause, though many vexatious circur combined to overcome her; one or two eperhaps, we may as well point out, in reader should not already have disthem.

In the first place, she was disap greatly disappointed, at Charles's absparture, at the moment she was flatter self her attempts to attach him to her we to be more fortunate than hitherto; we thought he seemed more happy in her and at the same time that she was ending to repair her self-accusing injust regard to Sinclair. With pain, not with surprise, she had heard him speak terms of dislike of his home, as he had done before; and she felt an apprefor the first time, of the cause of his—his dreaded, yet unusual manner, on her, alarmed her, and an indefinable

Unknown evil crept over her: then, again, she thought how lonely she was, her father and brother many miles distant, while a few acquaintance only were within reach. The latter circumstance was not one calculated to affect her greatly, in general, but now it served to increase her dejection, and for some minutes she indulged it unrestrained.

But Maria was not a desponding character, and she endeavoured to console herself by a glance at the less gloomy side of the picture. He might really only be called away by his affairs, from which her fears had given birth to a vision she almost condemned herself for daring to harbour: she recollected his promise of writing to her, and more especially she recalled, with satisfaction, the uncommon kindness of his last words: and in this review Mrs. Hamilton, by degrees, found consolation. She busied herself in numerous ways, and soon succeeded in making the smiling figure of hope her last companion. In a few days she dis-Patched a letter to Charles, which was answered after an interval of a week. A general tone of kindness ran throughout, which carried balm

however, was made of his return, or, indeed of his future proceedings, consequently she concluded it was Mr. Hamilton's intention to remain some time longer in London: but this could only be supposition, as she did not immediately reply, requesting information on the subject; but, as her husband hated writing, and very seldom troubled himself with any correspondence, she having frequently found that, after being so troubled, his communication testified his distaste of the employment, that he complained of want of time, or did not disguise his having been disturbed and displeased by something.

During his former absences, it was therefore a very rare occurrence for her to receive any letter from him, and she was not surprised that, day after day, and week after week, passed on, without any further account of him; although she had not failed to write to the hotel he had desired. In the mean time, her thoughts were partly absorbed by her brother's expected return: Mortimer, after having wandered over most part of Southern Europe, and even visited Africa, returned to the French

Apital, whence his father and sister learnt his atention of proceeding to England in the Course of a short time. The affection which had ever subsisted between Mortimer and Maria was of that high and noble character which emanates from esteem, and a just appreciation of the intrinsic merits of each other. They mutually felt a firm dependence in the judgment, the love, and the worth of their best friend; and it, in consequence, was with heartfelt pleasure that Mrs. Hamilton anticipated his arrival, rendered still more gratifying to her from his long absence.

Lord Fitz Eustace also apprised her that he proposed to meet his son immediately on his landing, and thence to proceed together to Henley. Here was ample employment, both mental and physical, for her, and as she might expect the travellers in three or four days from that time, her suspense was not likely to be of long continuance. Upon the receipt of this delightful news, Mrs. Hamilton did not like to trust any more to a letter, but resolved to go up to London, at least, to ascertain i Charles were there or not, which, from his con

tinued silence, she almost feared was imp ble. Accordingly she entered her carria; an early hour the following morning, and d first to the hotel to which she had directed letters she had written. To her inquiry, whe Mr. Hamilton were there, she was answered the negative by the waiter, whom she cal to the carriage to interrogate herself. "I Hamilton," added the man, "has not be here the last five weeks."

- "And pray how long did he then remaininguired the anxious wife.
- "Not more than a couple of hours, ma'am in fact, he only dined here before he went of by the Edinburgh mail."
 - " Edinburgh?" repeated Maria.
 - " Yes, ma'am."
- "And pray," rejoined she, after a momentary pause, "have not any letters come here for him within that time?"
- "Yes, ma'am, certainly; but being ignoranged the address of Mr. Hamilton, we have no been able to forward them. We are very particular in taking care of any papers or card left for him, as he is always in the habit of

coming, and having many letters addressed here for him."

"Could you oblige me by letting me see those You have at present. I wish to know if a letter I sent is still lying useless." Maria's re-Quest was quickly complied with, and she soon. discovered her own unfortunate epistles, among many others, as she looked over the parcel; the handwriting on one of these particularly struck her, and caused an involuntary pang of distrust in her bosom. It was directed in the small delicate hand of a female, and Maria felt convinced she had never before seen it, as for an instant she contemplated it with anxiety, ere she replaced them all in the hands of the waiter; at the same time returning an answer in the negative to his demand, whether she could inform him when Mr. Hamilton would retum.

Thus unsuccessful, she no longer delayed going to her own residence, where it was necessary she should wait some time for her horses to rest. It was now the beginning of October, and every place looked deserted, most of the houses were shut up, and the streets were

empty; in short, all around seemed in coformity with Mrs. Hamilton's feelings, where were those of anxiety and disappointment. was now satisfied her husband had left with a far different motive than the arran. ge ment of pressing business; but the though t of Lord Glenartney's sudden illness, which sho indulged for one brief moment, was quickly dispelled by his total silence on that head, and continued absence. "Perhaps," thought she, as she shrank into the corner of her converance, "perhaps he feared to tell me of his lordship's illness or death at the present moment," for her health had been indifferent for some time past, partly brought on by anxiety at being still without any hopes of a family, a circumstance which she had contemplated as the means of procuring her the felicity she desired, but had never enjoyed in her matrimonial state; but should he have been so considerate, she could furnish no reason for concealing it so long, and she trembled to think any less creditable cause detained him.

She felt it was now hopeless to seek Charles in London, and it grieved her to think her father

and her beloved Mortimer would arrive before she could summon him from Scotland, should he be there, and they would witness her descrition, and probably fathom her domestic discomfort. This sorely affected her, since it had been her great object hitherto, in which she had succeeded, to veil the unwelcome truth from the knowledge of her relations. From Mortimer she feared concealment would be impossible, since his attachment to her would cause him to expect an equal devotion in her husband

She was aroused from her gloomy reflections and forebodings by the carriage stopping; she cast her eyes up at the windows, and saw they were all shut, the loud ring and thundering knock given by her footman reverberated wildly through the almost unfurnished abode, conveying a chill, a sense of desolation to her heart, which tended to augment her previous disposition of loneliness.

The woman, who kept the house in the absence of the family, looked, she fancied, more old, more demure, than formerly, as she opened the door, and having admitted her lady, pro-

ceeded to unbar the shutters in one of the rooms.

Mrs. Hamilton felt it was almost unnecessary to inquire for Charles, but she determized not to be overcome by her feelings, and immediately interrogated the woman, whose answer soon annihilated the ray of hope which was afforded by this last resource. Mr. Hamilton had not called at the house since he lest it in July to go to Henley. Maria turned away, certainly not surprised. How could she be? but, sensible that her last feeble chance was destroyed, a chance on which she had not calculated as likely to produce any favourable result; and yet, when deprived of it by the voice of reality, she seemed to have relinguished her only valuable possession. So certain is it that the mind clings to phantoms. and as long as a shadow of hope remains, is tempted to look forward to a brilliant future. even though sense and reason declare no .expectation of good can or ought to be formed on such a basis.

The dispirited Maria, in a few hours, found herself again in her country abode, when she

lost no time in inditing a letter to Charles, which she sent off to Glenartney Castle, in hopes that he might receive it there, and be induced to return soon, although she now entirely gave up the idea of his being with her on the arrival of the travellers. She entreated him not to delay answering her if he should still be unable to come home, expressed her hopes that illness was not the cause of his absence; but carefully avoided any expression which might be construed into reproach for his conduct, or which might appear to allude. in the slightest degree, to her just anxiety at his resolute neglect. This business performed, she felt more happy, and turned her thoughts to the grateful contemplation of her re-union with those she loved.

A hurried note from Lord Fitz Eustace, on the second day, announced his safe landing, and informed her that she might look hourly for his arrival, since, as soon as he was joined by his son, he should not lose a moment in setting out for Henley. This letter, kind and delightful as it was, far from tranquilizing Mrs. Hamilton, only contributed to

heighten the disorder of her nervous systement Deeply affected by the ill success of journey to London, and the fears to which had given rise, added to previous delica health, and attendant low spirits, she w scarcely able to bear the anticipated pleasur particularly as no precise period was specifie for its occurrence Every noise made her starconvulsively, the sound of a wheel, were i ever so slight, made her tremble and turn pale_ and it was many minutes, nay, sometimes an hour, before she could recover from these agitations. In vain she condemned her weakness, in vain strove to repress these sensations, the debilitated body was unable to bear the shocks from which her firm and noble mind still rose triumphant, and essayed, unsuccessfully, to retain that empire over its earthly tenement which it had hitherto possessed in other trying circumstances.

CHAPTER XVI.

For thee, my own sweet sister, in thy heart I know myself secure, as thou in mine; We were, and are,—I am, even as thou art— Beings who ne'er each other can resign.

BYRON.

Thus passed three whole days, during which, it will be easily imagined, Mrs. Hamilton had not omitted to assure Lord Fitz Eustace of the joy she felt at the near prospect of seeing two such dearly beloved friends; mentioning, at the same time, her regret at Charles's being from home. It was towards the close of the day, perhaps verging on six o'clock, that Maria was sitting, pensively, in the large drawing-room, which looked doubly dreary, as the flickering fire, every

now and then relieving the twilig bright flame, plainly determined the of the apartment, and shone on occupant, who, with her head restin hand, looked thoughtfully at the d element, as it consumed the coal, a after piece fell beneath the power of flame, which gleamed fitfully at Suddenly she rose, as a gust of wind the house, and, while a ray of joy l her countenance, she approached the and again was still—a moment pi that her ears had not deceived her-t borne from a distance by the evenin she now heard distinctly-a carriag approached-every second seemed ' the throbbing of her pulses, and she leaned against the table for supp stopped at the door. She would have bell in her eagerness, but dared not 1 her hold. "How foolish I am!" sa she strove to walk across the room. she had taken a step for that purpo known voice was heard pronouncing

in the hall—the door was hastily thrown open—a glare of light burst in—her eyes filled with tears, and her efforts were ineffectual to advance towards Mortimer, who now entered. With what tenderness, with what rapture, did she not receive and return his caresses! how sweet were the endearments she had so long felt the want of! her father too, was all kindness, and the heart of the solitary was comforted.

She was no longer alone, or in the sad company of her uneasy thoughts; she had those by her side who loved, who cherished, her; whose gaze became melancholy, when they saw her pallid cheek and worn appearance. "You think me altered, Mortimer," she said, pressing his hand fondly. "Your looks tell me so, but you will see me better tomorrow; your arrival has hurried me."

"Though it is three years since we parted, dear Maria," answered her brother, "perhaps I was so unconscionable as to expect to find you the same as when I left, without considering the alterations of time and circumstance. I did not hear you had been ill."

- "Neither have I,—but, having been mu alone lately, I believe I have permitted a mind to dwell too long upon a subject of son anxiety to me. You, however, are also change in appearance, Mortimer, but it is for the better—my father, too, looks well," added shaffectionately. "How did you leave our frient in Ireland, dear sir?"
 - "All well, Maria: but where is Hamilton!
- "Yes," said Mortimer, "where is your huband, Maria?"
- "In Scotland, I believe," replied Mr Hamilton, calmly, "but I expect he will! home soon, as I wrote to request he won return, as soon as I learnt it was your kin intention to come to us."
- "And has he been away long?" ask Mortimer.
- "About six weeks, I think, therefore uncle must be satisfied with the length his visit."
- "Why did you not go with him, Mar The change would have done you good."
- "I fancy," replied she, "Glenartney is v strange, and does not like female society,

h reason I never accompany Charles. But ring, Mortimer," she continued, anxious ange the subject, "and we will enquire re are waiting so long for our dinner." Mrs. Hamilton had feared, so it hapthat her brother's penetration, aided ain accounts received from his father. onvinced him that there existed some ng cause for her altered health and ; jealous as he was, and had ever been, happiness, he failed not to watch her e greatest solicitude. He quickly perhow studiously she avoided the subject husband's absence, how anxiously she for, and yet almost seemed to dread ırn. He heard, with unfeigned surprise. aria had received but one letter from ice his departure, and he discovered, ething she said inadvertently, that his was precipitate and unexpected. Her reserve, on every thing appertaining Hamilton, prevented his ascertaining particulars from her, for he justly felt ct for the patient suffering so strongly in her behaviour.

Henley, and neither Charles, nor a letter him, had yet made their appearance; an now, for the first time, hinted his uneas to his father. Both he and Lord Fitz Et had witnessed the impatience with Maria had expected the post—both had how great had been her disappointment, she found no letter crowned her hopes both equally pitied her, and blamed hin could thus wound a heard so good, so kin worthy.

She had quitted the room, perhaps, for purpose of concealing a vexation she seeknew how to controul, and Mortimer after pondering a moment on the subject, not this rigid silence strange, my Lor the part of Hamilton? One letter in six seems to me but slender attention to a y affectionate wife."

"You say true, Mortimer, it is strang you are unacquainted with Charles's cl ter, or you would dismiss your surpri trust, for her and for his own sake, he your sister; but, I confess there have moments, when I have doubted whether he entertained affection for any living soul beside himself."

"Good Heavens! and yet you consented to, nay, urged, the marriage?"

"A lover, Mortimer, is always under the influence of his passion; he screens his faults and follies from the eye of his mistress, and, until the union had taken place, I marked not his unbounded selfishness. Now, my opinion is this, if Hamilton have nothing else to do, he will reply to that letter Maria wrote, but if other things invite his attention, he will delay writing, day after day, until both your and my patience is fairly exhausted."

"That climax will soon arrive, sir," replied Mortimer, "for all I have heard has already exhausted mine. Maria deserves to be happy, and, I am sure, his want of kindness is now rankling like a thorn in her heart. Her illness is that of the mind, and, unless there were some real cause for it, my sister is not one to be overcome. I own, sir, I am uneasy on her account; there has been more than double the time necessary for her to hear from Scot-

land; and, I think, your influence might produce a favourable result. True, as she says he may be ill; but, then, surely some one might hold the pen for him, and, if he loved her, he would be willing to allay her fears. Do you not think you could do something in the business, my lord?"

Lord Fitz Eustace thought a little, and ther replied, "I have my doubts, Mortimer, whether he be in Scotland at all."

- "Your doubts, my lord—where do you thin! he is, then?"
- "Nay, that I cannot tell; but I think his frequent journies, taken no one knows where augur anything but good."
- "Has he often left her before?" enquired the young man in a deep voice.
- "This is not the first time, Mortimer though I cannot say how frequently this ha occurred. It is dangerous to interfere be tween a man and his wife; but I can write if you think it will have the effect we desire."
- "You know the man, sir, and are the best judge of that. All I know is that, if he have harboured a thought injurious to Maris

neither will nor power shall be wanting to avenge her: while she has a brother's arm to protect her, she shall not innocently suffer."

"Gently, my dear boy," replied his father.
"I know your love for your sister will incite
you to anything; but be not rash. Let us
wait a few days longer, before we do anything, and, even then, she must be consulted."

"Certainly; but will you not write directly?"

"No; we will see what to-morrow brings forth."

His lordship having thus decided, Mortimer was induced to comply, and another day revolved. The hour for the delivery of the letters again arrived, and the countenance of her relatives glowed with pleasure, as several were handed to Mrs. Hamilton: they watched her narrowly, as her eye rapidly scanned their exterior; and, then, as her cheek grow pale, and a tear expressed her disappointment, Mortimer exclaimed, "Still no answer, Maria!"

"But too convincing a one, dear Mortimer,

replied she sorrowfully, as she put th identical letter she had written to her huband, ten days before, into his hand.

The words "returned letter—cannot be found" traced on the cover in red ink, immed ately satisfied him that her words were be too true; and his father's fears, he saw, we not without foundation. "And is this you reward for your patience and suffering, me poor sister?" he said, as he pointed the of noxious words out to his father. "I heavens! it is a sorry termination to yo hopes: perhaps, however, you know of sor other place where he may be found."

"No, indeed, dear Mortimer," replied Mamilton, as the tears rolled down her cheel "I do not: I wrote to Merton some time sine and learnt, from Sophia Hamilton, that he we not there. I judged he was in Scotland, or because I learnt he left London by the Edburgh mail."

"When did you ascertain that, Maria" said lord Fitz Eustace. "You did not menti it before."

"Only a few days before your arrival, "i

lord; until then, I thought he was in town. Do not look so angry, Mortimer: "she continued, turning to him, "he may be ill, and incapable of writing to me, as I said before, or even suffering from the effects of an accident. I know, if any thing had happened to him, he would not tell me. He is so careless with his gun, I have heard, that I always dread the consequences of his shooting excursions."

"Is it probable he may be so engaged?" enquired Mortimer eagerly.

"Yes;" replied his sister, with a look of embarrassment, however, which plainly indicated that her thoughts and words but ill agreed together; and that the supposition was the offspring of a feeling similar to that which prompts the drowning wretch to catch at a straw for safety; for she did not believe it likely to prove true.

Anxious to allay the indignation evinced by Mortimer, she encouraged the idea; but, in so doing, she raised his desire for elucidating the occasion of Hamilton's absence. Young Delmar's generous disposition could not endure the idea of having judged unworthily

of an innocent man, and he knew that I opinion he then entertained of him, in a uncertainty of the period, was any thing I satisfactory to himself, or advantageous Charles. His resolution was, therefore, is stantly taken, and he rejoined, in a tone determination, "If such be the case, Maria which I very much doubt if you credit, an which I fairly own I do not—if such, I say, be the case, it is due both to your husband, an ourselves, to take every means in our power to remove those suspicions which cannot for to be caused by all that has occurred."

"You are ever anxious to do any thir for me, Mortimer; but—"

She hesitated, and he said, "But, Mar your fear for Hamilton's health is count balanced by that of discovering the truth such suspicions. Nay, my own sister;" added tenderly, seeing she appeared grea distressed, "do not let me make you unhapp there may not be any occasion, but you me permit me to learn, if possible, where t truant is. I assure you I will be so care

that, if advisable, he shall never discover we have even made an enquiry for him."

"You used not to be so liable to take alarm," replied Maria reproachfully.

"Iam so only on your account; for, if I could Procure his proper direction, you might write and satisfy yourself of his being well."

"I really think," said lord Fitz Eustace, "such a proceeding will be judicious, since I intend to return to Dublin shortly; and I would gladly see you together before I go. Come, my dear, I am sure Mortimer will not do more or less than you desire; and, I think, You ought certainly to write to him."

"Since such is my father's advice, Mortimer,"
said Mrs. Hamilton hesitatingly, "I will consent to your proposal: but, I entreat you not
to act upon anything you may discover."

"Rely upon my discretion, dear Maria, on hat head. But think over the business before ou put it into my hands; and give me my inal orders to-night. I see the carriage is dready at the door now."

Mrs. Hamilton rose to prepare for her drive, and Delmar, as he waited to attend her, congratulated himself on the prospect of sifti this business, which, in his eyes, was attend with many unpleasant circumstances. I notice was taken of the subject the rest of the day. Maria seemed more out of spirits the usual, and her brother, if possible, more attentive. The evening was soon gone, and, as the young relations parted for the night, Mortim looked the question he was unwilling again urge, as he felt she was wounded by his supicions. With a calmness he had nanticipated, she said, "I will give you leave Mortimer, to procure Charles's address, you can; but nothing more."

- "I am happy you have so determined, Ma—since, I fear, had your commands been oth wise, I should have been rebel enough to what I now purpose, for my own satisfactic
 - "Then, my concession is of no avail."
- "Oh yes, it is, Maria. I shall work v ten times more pleasure for you than myse She pressed his hand, and, without anot word, they separated.

The coach conveyed our friend Delman the course of the next day, to London; and

rigorously began his investigation, visiting Ibbotson's first, where his enquiries met with the same result as those of his sister, a fortnight before. As he turned over the letters addressed to Mr. Hamilton, his attention was attracted by the same writing which had been the object of Maria's surprise; for an instant he attentively scrutinised it, as it lay upon the table, then took it up and narrowly observed each word and letter; seemingly, however, without deriving any benefit, for he laid it down again thoughtfully, and continued to look at the others. When he had satisfied himself, he asked the waiter, in a tone of indifference, " who had brought that letter?" for, having no post-mark, he was convinced it had been left by a private hand. answer he received disappointed him, for it conveyed no assistance for his end in view; and Mortimer, turning on his heel, left Verestreet, equally far from the truth, and certainly more uneasy than he had entered it. He called at various other places unsuccessfully in quest of his object, until, vexed and fatigued, he at length returned to the hotel, where he intended to sleep, and, having tak a solitary dinner, during which he consider the operations for the morning, he went the Haymarket to while away the evening.

The sun was just beginning to pierce the dense fog, which hung over the city like a hug night cap, when he again sallied forth; and with a hasty step, and business looking face began to thread the mazes of the vast Metro His ill success of the previous day had rather increased, than diminished, hi ardour; and it was seldom, indeed, that b did not execute any thing on which he has once made up his mind. A bright thought ha struck him the evening before, while deeply ruminating on the best means of obtaining hi purpose, which he was determined to put i practice without delay. It was that of enqui ing for Hamilton at his Bankers, thinking probable they must know where he might Lombard Street was soon reach found. and he quickly entered the house on which hopes depended, and made his business know The person he addressed himself to, profes utter ignorance on the subject, but, after

terrogating another young man, he learnt that, if he would wait a few minutes, it could be procured from one of the partners. this, it will readily be believed, Delmar consented, and he spent some minutes in a state of uneasiness, fearing, now that he thought he had succeeded in his search, to learn that the opinion he had reason to form might be cormborated; yet impatiently, though silently, finding fault with his messenger for his tardy return. After a short time, which to Mortimer seemed everlasting, he made his appearance, and, placing a card in his hand, said, "This, Sir, is the address sent us by Mr. Hamilton a short time ago, and to whom we accordingly *rote under cover to that person."

Delmar took it eagerly, rapidly glanced over the words inscribed, and then turning deathly pale, uttered the single exclamation, "Hah!" in a tone of surprise, mingled with indignation, as he strode to the door. In a moment he was in the street, where, instantly hailing a cab, he ordered it to the Green Man, in Oxford Street, and there mounted a Henley coach, preserving throughout a look of sternness and inflexibility,

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MORTIMER DELMAR.

boding no good to the object by which anger had been called forth, and a disposi though unimportant to strangers, still suffic to deter any one from volunteering convetion, which he felt neither able nor willin support.

CHAPTER XVII.

Fate steals along with silent tread, Found oft'nest in what least we dread, Frowns in the storm with angry brow, But in the sunshine strikes the blow.

COWPER.

We must, with the license permitted to the author, compress the events of months, as well as leap lightly over a lapse of years. Our friends must be so kind as to take a similar hop, skip, and jump, and, without reverting to the space which intervenes, turn their thoughts upon Mrs. Hargrave. They must, however, suppose a year and a half to have made a hange in our village flower; not that her leanty was less dazzling, or her happiness upaired. No! but she was a mother! That hange, that happy change, had been wrought.

She had presented her doting husband with pledge of her love! What young mother w not subscribe to the emotions of thrilling d light, of exquisite joy, conveyed by seeing th€ first, their only child, pressed in the man arms of its father! How frequently does sl not repeat the grateful appellation of mothe to herself, as the unconscious infant repos beside her; or picture a thousand pleasur from its nurture! She thinks not of the care the anxieties, every succeeding month w bring with it, or the possibility of the lovel the fostered floweret being nipped in the bi She is alive only to the happiness of her not situation, and thinks herself the proudest, t most favored wife and mother in existence.

Such was Ellen Hargrave, on the birth her little girl, about fifteen months after I marriage, at which time, if anything had be wanting to complete her felicity, it was t event; for Hargrave was as desirous as her for a child, and, though she had wished a b that trifling disappointment was soon forg ten, when she found that Hargrave appearather gratified, than otherwise, at a circu

stance which she had feared would be a source of regret to him.

No sooner was she in a state of convalescence, than Mr. Vernon reminded her husband of his promise to acknowledge his marriage, as soon as this event had taken place; and, to his great surprise, was told, by Hargrave, that had he had a boy, he would, most assuredly, have done so, but, as it was, he hoped his Ellen would have no objection still to defer the disclosure for awhile.

To this, Mr. Vernon had expressed his unqualified disapprobation. "I feel I am growing very old," he urged, "and should I be taken away, where is my child to look for a home, which you refuse to accord her now? How am I to believe you will then do what my arguments fail in effecting?"

"Believe, Sir," replied Hargrave, "my intention of discovering my union, as soon as circumstances will permit, by the love I bear her—by the oath I have taken! Yet," he added, "if you and Ellen still distrust me, every selfish consideration shall be laid aside, and I will instantly present her to my uncle."

Upon hearing this, Mrs. Hargrave declareher wish to wait her husband's pleasure and time. She had no fears for his faith, while s thousand were called forth at the idea o forcing him prematurely to introduce her to the world, expressing herself so perfectly happy that she dreaded the effects of the slightes change; and, as Hargrave encouraged her to hope a few months would put an end to the concealment, she entreated Mr. Vernon to comply. Thus pressed, what could the Recto do? Nothing! therefore, he tacitly consented to what, indeed, he could not prevent, and again the subject was hushed for a time Hargrave continued to prolong his stay from week to week, and day to day; the child grew and became more engaging daily, and Mr Vernon, although he felt a natural decay, was free from actual illness, and continued to par ticipate in the halo of happiness and peace which appeared to radiate around his latte days.

Such hours of uninterrupted bliss are few and fleeting, they appear scarcely fit for thi world of care and sorrow, and are seen only

at intervals, when they must ever create a feeling of alarm, from their being often the forerunners of some evil, which necessarily falls the heavier from the inequality of its victims to support it. Such must at least convey a keding of insecurity to the contemplative mind, though to the unsophisticated Mrs. Hargrave, it brought no sensation of the kind. her husband: with respect to him, it might truly be said, "And coming events cast their shadows before." For a day or two an unaccountable weight had preyed upon his spirits, attributable, however, to his purpose of leaving Claybrook for a time, and his anticipations of being again importuned to take his wife with him. This intended departure he delayed announcing, until unforeseen events wholly precluded the possibility of his doing so.

The little family party were congregated one morning in the parlour, to which our readers are no strangers, and where no material change had taken place, if we except the introduction of a few articles of furniture, such as a rose-wood desk, and accompanying table, and small, though elegant, book-cases arranged

against the wall. Mr. Vernon was engage in perusing Mant's Bible, which lay open the table, whence his eye turned ever are anon, with a smile, on Ellen, as she sat on the sofa, gently balancing her infant. Its so breathing told how calmly it slept, and after awhile the young mother looked up with smile at her successful endeavours to lull it the repose. Hargrave was leaning against the window, with his eyes fixed gloomily upon her, and his forbidding frown, meeting he bright sunny smile, in a moment, dispelle her satisfaction. "Dearest," she said reproachfully, "why that look?"

"You may well ask that question, my Eller when I have every reason to be cheerful i your society. Bah! away with melancholy, he continued gaily, "it is not fit for so happ a spot as this: come, Ellen, let me see yo smile again." As he said these words, he im printed a warm kiss on her fair brow, an was rewarded by a look of love—a smile c ineffable sweetness—his last from one whom he loved to distraction, notwithstanding hi numerous and grievous faults.

Hargrave was still bending over his innocent wife and infant, tasting one of the sweetest portions of enjoyment from the cup of life which had ever fallen to his lot, when the attention of all was excited by a chariot and four, driving quickly past. A voice was heard giving orders in the loud tone of authority, the carriage stopped, and in a time, as short as that consumed in the relation, a young man, about six-and-twenty, alighted, followed by a tall elegant female, whom he supported up the parsonage garden.

The approach of these two visiters caused a dreadful revulsion in this abode of domestic peace. Ellen had just laid her child on the sofa, and advanced to where Hargrave stood at the window, when he exclaimed, as he threw one arm round her slight figure, and an ashy paleness overspread his countenance, "Good God!! what will become of us? I am lost! All is discovered!"

A scream escaped the terrified Mrs. Hargrave, as these words of direful import struck upon her ear, and she recognized, in the stranger, one she had known in days gone by. Without knowing why, she clung was to her protector, who pressed her convuls to his breast. These incoherent words scarcely passed his lips, when the door or room was flung open, and Mortimer Dorushed forward. "Villain!" he said, voice of thunder, "what do you here?"

" He guards his wife, sir," replied the re coming forward, and speaking in tones of lent agitation, caused by this sudden irrul

"Wife!" repeated the intruder, at the time casting a look of pity and anger upounfortunate Ellen: "would to heaven were a wife!" He spoke in a tone of feeling, and continued, as he laid an hand on the arm of the poor girl, and a to draw her away from her betrayer, "H ton, I charge you, as you value your to relinquish this unhappy victim of crimes."

"Oh! Charles, Charles!" exclaimed Hamilton, in accents of the deepest di and agony: "what have I done to deserv treatment? how have I merited to be abandoned, thus degraded?"

the justly accused man strove to find reply; his tongue, as well as his med paralysed, as the conviction of ul situation crossed his mind. He rfully upon his companions, while ciously relaxed grasp enabled Delcricate Ellen from his arms, whom in a bewildered state, on a chair; g hold of Hamilton with a force lled the latter partly to his senses, gave him a look, beneath which he e said, in a deep voice, "Know able man, that you have married ? and that a brother's hand shall oth in one?" ed!" repeated Charles, speaking ilty; "Ellen is not my wife," we, dear, dear, Hargrave!" shriekcarded creature, starting up and eavouring to throw herself into his a which Mortimer, however, pre-: "what have you said?" 1th, Ellen," said he vehemently.

ay child!" she pursued, throwing

nerself frantically in her knees be sofa, and observing the infant with kiss of Is a historial answered Hargin more properly speaking. Hamilton, hollow voice of approp. Sinking on Ellen heard no mire, a cry of distributed the apartment, and she lay co and senseless on the floor.

The few moments which succeed passed in will confusion, each acting feelings dictated, regardless of the cauhad drawn them together. The hands timer and Charles, which the former, had never anticipated could be joined; now united in sustaining the lovely be so fondly loved. The bewildered of loudly called for assistance; while Ma injured Maria, sought ineffectually the cries of the frightened child, which ened by the noise, added its little the general uproar. Delmar, with l promptitude, caused the mother and to be removed, and placed under the Margaret, to whom he knew she i

entrusted, desiring that medical advice be procured, if such should be deemed iry; then, forcing Hamilton into another notwithstanding his attempts to follow ip which hovered round the screaming he resolute, but unhappy, brother, havired the door, turned with unnatural ire to his companion, and said, "There avy reckoning between us, Hamiltonne as rarely exists between fellow-men. tries of your legitimate wife first iner brother to fathom the mystery of your absences, and what a tissue of vils he not discovered! Heaven and hat I thould be called upon to chastise 10 vile makes me curse my birth." nar," shouted Charles, roused by the ontempt, and a perception of his desase, almost to frenzy, "Delmar, how u affirm I have wronged Maria? peat, Ellen is not my wife. A man's re not crimes."

creant!" retorted Mortimer passiondo you seek safety from the effects of ime beneath a lie, as foul as mortal can

utter, but, it is useless to bandy words wi so false a villain." His lip curled high as continued, "But learn, however, that Elen equally the child of Lord Fitz Eustace, wi Maria and myself, although the offspring unlicensed love; and equally demands 1 interference. That you have profaned the rit of matrimony, I well know, since neither I Vernon nor herself would receive your pr posals without such form; besides, I saw t holv emblem of her union on a hand by f too pure to be tainted by your touch. Atten not, therefore, to deny the charge, but prepa vourself to meet me in vonder church-va whence one of us must not return in life Have you weapons?" Hamilton glared fu ously around, but, making no answer, He timer continued, firmly, "Speak! have y pistols?"

- "Yes," he replied, gloomily, pressing hand on his fevered brow.
 - "And you will not fail me?"
- "After words like yours, Delmar," return Hamilton, haughtily, "my spirit brooks a such a question. Blood only shall we

way their stain. The time is all you have to fix"

Mortimer drew out his watch, and, holding it up, said, deliberately, "One hour is all I will allow. I will take that opportunity of sending Maria to her father, and I recommend you to settle your worldly affairs, and ease your conscience."

"I can do no better than return the advice," replied Charles, who had now somewhat recovered the first shock of the discovery, and saw his only chance of escape was by effontery. He struggled, therefore, to return Mortimer's withering look, as they parted, but was no sooner alone than he began to evince every sign of the most frightful despair. He bolted the door, and then dashed his clenched hand against his forehead with a force which made his senses reel,—he rushed to and fro in the chamber for a few minutes. and then stood, statue like, in the middle of his course,—his pale, haggard countenance, and quivering lip, betokening his emotion. Presently, a wild scream from Ellen awoke him from his stupor, he gnashed his teeth, and clasped his hands, until the blood flowed under his nails. He then took a case of pir from a closet, and, having seen that contents were properly loaded, he sat dopposite a small clock, and fixed his upon the slowly revolving hands. More once he raised the weapons, smiling gras he did so, until ten minutes were all gone of the time Delmar had spec Charles then seized a pen, which lay standish beside him, and immediately b with a trembling hand, to write; at a occupation we will leave him.

END OF VOL. I.

PRINTED BY B. BENSLEY.

MORTIMER DELMAR;

AND

GHFIELD TOWER.

TALES

BY THE

TOR OF "CONRAD BLESSINGTON."

Whoever thinks a faultless piece to see, Thinks what ne'er wan-nor is, nee e'er shall be : In every work regard the writer's end, Since nose can compass more than they intend ; And, if the means be just, the conduct trar, Applicate, in spite of trivial faults, is due.

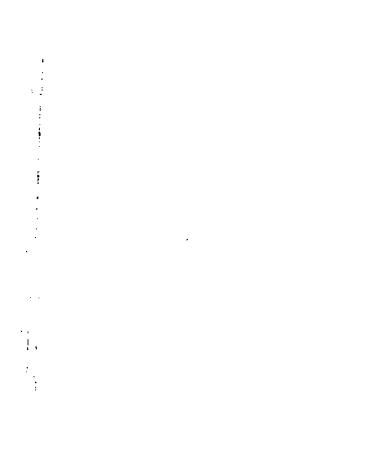
IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON

DERS AND OTLEY, CONDUIT STREET.

1838.



MORTIMER DELMAR.

CHAPTER I.

Arnold. And shall I live on, A burden to the earth, myself, and shame Unto what brought me into life?

THE DEFORMED TRANSFORMED.

With a smoother, though still undaunted, brow, Mortimer re-entered the parlour, where his weeping sister sat alone, "I must request you will go to his Lordship, dearest Maria," he said, in a low, concentrated voice, "this is no place for you. Without your express desire you should not have accompanied me; you know I was utterly averse to it."

"You were so," said Mrs. Hamilton, scarcely able to command her voice, "but I am satisfied now. Alas! how fully!" Tears prevented vol. II.

her farther utterance, and, as soon as a little composed, Mortimer persuad return to the carriage, "Are not y with me?" she enquired, eagerly.

" No, I have yet a duty to fulfil. father if I am not with him by nine not to expect me to-night. God bless him!" He closed the carriage doo as she was about to interrogate hi and, deaf to her entreaties for delay the servant to go to the Inn where left Lord Fitz Eustace. As the seceded quickly from his view, he steadily, and a thrill of pain atter mentary feeling that, perhaps, he from a sister he adored, for the la then turned and contemplated, w ness he had not yet had leisure to scene of his former agonizing em

Too much absorbed, in the fir his arrival, to be sensible of a exciting cause of his being the felt the pain of his old wound he looked upon the dwelling spent so many happy hours, mental faculties had received shock; and where, it appear

to act another scene in the drama of le probable destruction of his own and that of friends he prized, he vailed his fate. "Ah, why!" thought I, of all men, be selected to sink loved Ellen, into this abyss of who would have saved her the most nt anxiety. Yet, for Maria, I ought thing; she has all a sister's claims and, to avenge her, my heart must el-my duty demands this sacrifice, I have embarked in this sad affair. shrink, but boldly go through with minutes he stood, in silent comith himself, before he entered the nd when he did so, Mr. Vernon was lour: the tear of grief slowly trickled furrowed cheek, as he sat in his old , while his clasped hands, and closed inced Mortimer that he was dead to vents, and that his God occupied all hts. Shocked by his patient sufferaps more than if the old man had ment in his sorrow, Mortimer stood ear him, until a heavy groan told to interrupt the mental struggle to confer a kindness. "Mr. Vernon," "pardon my intrusion, but allow me to enqui if Ellen —" He had proceeded the far, when the loud report of a pistol we heard, a shriek instantly succeeded, and, for the space of two or three seconds, the recta and Delmar looked upon one another without daring to enquire, or communicate, the mutual fears. "Good Heavens! Mr. Vernon the latter then exclaimed, "what can have happened?"

"I know not," returned he, unable to move from terror, "and I fear to learn. Alas! ala that I should have lived to see this day!"

Seeing the rector was incapable of exertice the young man hastened to the spot when the sound proceeded, and, with a tremblich hand, tried the door of the room where he had left the unhappy Hamilton; it was faster inside, but a moan from within satisfied had that some dreadful catastrophe had happen Mortimer reeled against the wall, almost over come by his torturing feelings, but now, be joined by some of the servants, also attract by the noise, he quickly recovered himself he felt to fail at such a moment would be unpardonable weakness. By his directions

door was broken open, and he entered the room, followed by the surgeon, who had been called in to see Ellen, and by Mr. Vernon, who had partially rallied, during the period which the operation of forcing the lock had necessarily occupied. The sight which their first glance disclosed was sufficient to transfix both Delmar and the good clergyman with horror; for Hamilton was extended on the sofa, where he had apparently fallen, weltering in his blood, which still flowed from a wound in his left side.

The weapon, with which the fatal deed had been committed, had dropt upon the floor, while its fellow lay upon the table, together with a sheet of paper, on which he had been writing.

"Mr. Vernon," said Mortimer, as soon as he was aware of the horrible reality, in a tone of remonstrance, "You are not equal to this; can you not trust this gentleman to attend properly here, without subjecting yourself to such a painful scene—you may comfort Ellen, and I will stay here." Mr. Vernon spoke not, but he suffered himself to be conducted by his sympathising adviser to Ellen's chamber door, whence Mortimer returned to where the surgeon was now terdering every assistance to the

unfortunate Charles. Life was discovered not to be extinct, though the wound was of a very serious nature, and, after some time skilfully employed, animation was restored.

"Why," said the wounded man, to his medical attendant, with difficulty, as soon as he could articulate, "why have you been so merciless as to recal me to life? I was in hopes I should have ended my misery, and I feel that your mistaken care is only a prolongation of my torment.—Delmar," he continued "I flattered myself we should never meet again here—you drove me to attempt my life, and I would to heaven I had done it completely, to avoid your triumph!"

"My triumph, Hamilton! I trust I shall never triumph in the distresses of another, whosoever he may be—I pity, at the same time I condemn, you—are you in much pain?"

"Much, much," replied he, at the same time uttering a groan of anguish, then closing his eyes for some time, he continued silent. When he again spoke, it was to call the surgeon to his bedside. "Brownlow," he said, "tell me the truth, is not my case hopeless? you need not fear speaking," he continued, seeing that

inactionary hesitated, "your looks say what your tongue refuses to confirm."

"My dear Sir," replied Mr. Brownlow, "I will not disguise my fears for the consequences of this rash act, but——"

"Enough, enough, Brownlow, I anticipate your false hopes, I know I am a dead man—therefore, I have only to request you will inform me how long I shall probably linger—I have no wish for life, or I should not have attempted its destruction—the plain truth, Brownlow?" He fixed his eyes upon the doctor's countenance, with anxiety, who said, "Since such is your wish, Mr. Hargrave, I will own that the removal of the bullet, I foresee, would be extremely hazardous, but four-and-twenty hours will most likely be the term of your existence, if the operation be dispensed with—I do not think recovery possible."

"I thank you for your candour, my good Sir, it is invaluable to me. Delmar," he added, after a moment's pause, "I have known but little of you, though I have heard much to your advantage, I will not, therefore, he sitate to entreat you will not refuse to let me see Hrs. Hamilton—Where is she?"

"With her father."

"What!" returned Charles, in a hollo voice, "are all come to witness my disgrac but, perhaps, I deserve it—do you think Man will come to me?"

"I dare not promise, Hamilton, she kno not your situation yet; I will, however, go her to-night, and if she be able to accompa me, you shall see her early to-morrow."

"I would speak to you," returned the dyin man, "but not now—you will come in t morning?"

"Most assuredly."

"Tell Maria I cannot die in peace, unti have obtained her pardon, and that my hou are limited. What is the time now, Brownlov Oh, heavens! this pain." On being told was eight o'clock, he said, "Well, well, p the watch there, that I may see it.—No Delmar, leave us, but entreat Mr. Vernon let me see him, if he can make up his mind look upon me again."

"I will, Hamilton: can I do anything el for you?"

"Only, if I die before the morning," he i plied, in a low tone, "do not let your rance follow me to the grave."

Mortimer, who had advanced a step or t

braids the door, again approached the bed, and said, as a struggle of contending feeling was apparent by the working of his features, "The wrongs of my family are grievous, Hamilton, but he must indeed be bold, to permit his indignation to invade the oblivious of the tomb; my duty shall be followed, if possible, yet, remember, I am mortal."

The cheek of the invalid flushed, but he made no reply, and Mortimer withdrew to seek the old clergyman, whom he summoned from Ellen's room.

"Mr. Vernon," he said, "I sent for you, because Mr. Hamilton is anxious to speak to Jou, and also to apprise you that very little hopes are entertained of his recovery; consequently, by his desire, I must request you will permit me to bring Mrs. Hamilton here in the morning. We are not strangers, sir, and I hope you will believe I am unwilling to distress you unnecessarily. Heaven knows, for my friends' sakes, as well as my own, I would I had not been the instrument to work all this misery!"

"I do believe you, Mr. Delmar," returned Mr. Vernon, in a voice half choked by his emotion. "I will not suppose any one would roluntarily produce such misery; yet, I do not

blame your conduct, it is all that is honora Come here when you like, but—," and the man spoke with a spirit his companion not given him credit for, "Lord Fitz Eus shall never come under my roof while I !

Mortimer's heightened colour told the this speech conveyed, but he hastened to plain his intention of returning to his fa and concluded by enquiring, most kindly, the unfortunate Ellen.

"Alas!" said the rector, in answer to interrogatory, "she is in the most distri state possible. Fit has succeeded fit. frightful rapidity and violence, and I fe blow will destroy her sense, if she rega health." Mr. Vernon brushed away the of agony which gathered in his eye as he: and Mortimer, as he stood gazing upor felt that he would have given worlds f relief bestowed by that single tear. see her to-morrow," said he, "but now consolation myself, and could not affor Tell her, however, from me, I lov will protect her." He wrung the han Vernon gave him, in token of his confi and, with a heart too full for further utte he left the cottage, and hastily pursue

road to F——, where his friends waited his arrival. Vain would it be to attempt to unravel the state of his mind, as he passed onward. Anger, indignation, sorrow, pity, affection, and contempt, by turns gained possession of his feelings, and almost drove him to distraction; but, as he neared the end of his walk, he recognised the imperative necessity for calming himself, before he joined his sister; and, after a few turns before the house which contained her, he summoned resolution to enter.

CHAPTER II.

"Would," thought he, "as the picture grows.

I on its stalk had left the rose!

O why should man's success remove

The very charms that wake his love!"

As soon as Mr. Vernon was alone, he recalled Hamilton's message to his mind, but he could not immediately answer it. Stunned as the old man was, by this dreadful and unexpected calamity,—borne down by age and previous suffering—almost distracted by his beloved Ellen's alarming state; it will easily be imagined that it was not without the greatest pain that he contemplated entering Charles's room. Anger and indignation had taken possession of his mind, and he feared he should not be able to exercise his usual self-command in meeting the seducer of his adopted child;

when he recalled Mortimer's intimation of milton's danger, his natural benevolence sawakened, and he determined to overcome s reluctance to answer the unhappy man's ppeal. With a heavy heart, therefore, he turned to enter the room, where he sat down by the bed, without saying a word, and, for a few minutes, no one spoke. The rector was totally absorbed by his melancholy ideas, while the invalid felt unwilling to commence a conversation which he knew must be painful to both, and so peculiarly humiliating to himself.

At length, after looking attentively and sorrowfully at his aged companion, for a moment, he said, in a faltering voice, "This is kind, most kind of you, Mr. Vernon, to come to me,—yet, I scarce dare hope you can so far forget my crimes as to bear with me a little longer.—I am dying, sir,—Delmar has, probably, told you the cause, and I would unburthen my conscience to you. I am aware how little I deserve your clemency, but I now fear to meet my end by slow degrees, as much us I before courted it. Is there mercy in heaven, for crimes like mine?"

The person he addressed looked up in

surprise, the question was so startling, sa abrupt, that he did not instantly reply; and Hamilton pursued, "Can you not give make hope? Must I perish for ever?"

"Heaven forbid you should think so, Charles!" exclaimed the good man, as his countenance brightened. "My heavenly master never turns a deaf ear to the voice of repentance, and, most assuredly, you will be heard."

"You must pray for me, Mr. Vernon-I dare not-cannot."

"Say not so," replied the other, "You know not the mercy, the goodness, of the Almighty!"

"You know not my wickedness, Mr. Vernon, hear me, before you decide. Yet, tell me first if the hapless being, who has furnished me with all the happiness I have ever enjoyed be able to bless my eyes. Let me see my Ellen, once more—only once."

"Never," said the clergyman, in a voice trembling partly with anger, and partly with newly aroused emotion, at the name of the unfortunate girl. "Never! dare you hope that such conduct as yours merits it? No merciless man, you cannot! besides, you victim has been thrown almost into phreasy

by your cruel words-she now lies in the greatest danger; each moment may prove her last, and, I shall, perhaps, be again left without one tie in the world. Oh! Mr. Hamilton. little did I think at the moment I received the suffering traveller into my humble dwelling, that I admitted a wolf in sheep's clothing. You were ill-you were in want of assistance, and I treated you as a friend, as a son-you sought and obtained the affection of my beloved Ellen; but, when I vielded to vour solicitations for her hand, I never dreamed I was receiving a viper into my bosom, which was eventually to ruin my peace. Alas! that I should witness the destruction of my only comfort in this world of trial, by means of one, in whom I too fondly-too blindly confded." His voice failed, and the old man's sony was perceptible, by the convulsion of his whole frame.

"Your reproaches are but too just," said Charles, "I know I am a villain of the deepest die; but if any excuse can palliate my conduct, it is in my having been forced to marry a woman I never loved. I entreat you, Mr. Vemon, to hear me—condemn me you must, but hear and pity the wretch who has ruined

himself, and all around him, by listening only to his own gratification."

"Why should I listen to your villany, Mr. Hamilton? it cannot restore the fair fame, the health, or happiness, you have destroyed; it cannot make reparation for what you have done. My poor girl will die, and your explanation will only render me more miserable, that, by my accordance, Ellen should have been thus doomed to suffer."

"Spare me, Mr. Vernon," replied Hamilton, in a voice of agony, "I know I ought not to expect mercy, but if you speak of her, of her sufferings, you place me on the rack. Alas! alas! to think that she, whom I so fervently love...."

"Love!" repeated the old man, interrupting him, "love! name it not—you never loved her—you only made her gentle nature, her beauty, serve your vile pleasures. Oh! no, you never loved her!"

"I own my crimes, Mr. Vernon, I own that selfishness has ruled my actions through life—that I thought solely of myself in my visits here, but still I have deeply, fondly loved, nay, almost worshipped Ellen. May I find that mercy from above which you refuse me

dy injured wife will be here in a few and to her I will confide the statement gladly have made to a minister of the rom whom I might have derived some on in my last moments. Farewell, el you are too much injured by me pected to relent. Still may Heaven and my unfortunate Ellen!"

opped, and Mr. Vernon took his hand, with a countenance whereon anger d with his better feelings, the latter obtained the mastery as he spoke, y as I must deplore your conduct, milton, far be it from me to refuse can do for you at so awful a if therefore, you wish to receive the of religion, I will afford you in all er."

ton returned the rector's pressure of d, "I thank you, Mr. Vernon, you n, hear my tale."

ernon motioned him to proceed, which, short pause, he did, in the following 'I need scarcely tell you that, since maintance, my life has been a constant of deception and misery. Falsehood, t dreadful and extensive, was neces-

sary to conceal my crime, and, surely, if e a hell could be created in mortal breast, it been so in mine. I have always represent myself to you as an orphan, but I unhapped have two indulgent parents to mourn disgrace and death. It would not, however have suited my purpose to have had connection discovered, for, three years ago was persuaded, by my father, to marry the lady you saw here to-day, a person of la property, and Lord Fitz Eustace's of daughter."

The rector groaned deeply, and Charhastily said, "Pardon me, Mr. Vernon would say I thought so, then; to my coanow know the contrary. I never loved I but was dazzled by her eclat and fortune, a in a fatal moment, I consented to sell my for gold. It matters little to you how we li in the world of pleasure; but, as months rol away, every spark of affection for my gay vanished. I was disappointed, and reper the step which I had taken, and, consequen sought dissipation to drown thought. In frame of mind the accident occurred which I cured my introduction to you. I saw Elle saw her beauty; I admired her; who, ind

could fail to do so! Yes; I admired her: was enamoured at first sight, and basely thought that if I could not be master of such uncommon charms, I would, at least, render them subservient to my pleasures. The name by which you always addressed me favoured my design, for I foresaw that it would effectually prevent me from detection. Under the cognomen of Hargrave, I fancied I might securely play my diabolical game, and the ruin of a pretty rustic was only a trifle in my eyes."

"Stay, Mr. Hamilton; I command you, stay," interposed his auditor indignantly, "I dure not lend my ear to such a shameless account. I will not stay to listen to such designs against my child." He rose as he spoke, but Hamilton continued: "By all you hold most sacred, sir, I request you will hear the confession of a dying sinner. minutes more, and I will trouble you no farther." Such an appeal was not likely to be made in vain, the rector again seated himself, and Hamilton resumed: " I delayed my risit to my uncle from day to day, unable to tear myself from Ellen, whose constant attention, added to her beauty, were attractions which I was too weak, too selfish, to over-

I soon found, however, that to on so innocent, so chaste, as Ellen Vernon, could never expose my intention withou losing her and your esteem for ever; and yet. I could not make up my mind to destro my happiness by giving up all thoughts o making her mine. Yet, at that period, I still struggled with my passions, I resolved to pr ceed on my journey, which you know, sir. did; but I had not left you many hours before I repented it, for the demon of love assails me, and I became almost wild. I, who ha never felt an affection for my wife, good at kind as she has been to me, was entirely over come by an uncontroulable, an unlicense attachment to the village beauty. More the once I was tempted to retrace my steps befo I reached my uncle's; but in this sing instance I restrained myself, and continu during my absence in a state of torment: at its expiration, I voluntarily hastened cast myself into the toils from which I mit then have escaped, had I been so incline but I was completely blinded to every th but that of my own selfish feelings. not shock you by detailing my sensation when I discovered, by my reception, that l Ellen was not indifferent to me;—
t to say that I passed the first few
ter my return in a kind of trance,
sich I was not aroused until I had
a faith, no longer at my disposal, to
ly Ellen. She referred me to you;
sen saw that a trifle must not daunt
would succeed in my object. I faa tale to serve my purpose, and sucn deceiving you, by bringing forward
t to back my false assertions."

who then," demanded the rector, in a horror, "was that miserable man who inder the profession of sanctity, conth villary?"

cuse me," returned Hamilton, "it is rial now to expose him; it is sufficient on he was one who owed me much, t I made use of his gratitude to blind I must do him the justice to say that he new that I was already married, for we met for years, and he only intended to e at the time of my father's obduracy. sllow! he died soon after, in happy see of his own or his friend's errors. h his testimony I gained my object; reed to my becoming the husband of

your grand-daughter; but I have never for gotten my shame, my feelings of conscentic remorse, as you placed the spotless hand of: victim at my disposal. Had you suspected: veracity, you might easily have discover my confusion; but your extreme generosi prevented it, and I became an accepted low Often during the succeeding month, though times supremely happy, the conviction of a cruelty and wickedness would come across 1 I loked upon my prize with mixed for ings of pity and self-reproach, which not u frequently were near betraying me; Ellen w so contented, herself, that she could not accou for my dark frown, though, had she been awa of the fire which raged in my heart, her su prise would have been augmented, in com quence of the few and slight indications of mental disease. I could not help condemnit myself, and brooding over the dangerous gan in which I was embarking. Once, indeed, thought of declaring my falsehood, of reven ing my real situation; but I only saw shar humiliation, and self-denial in such a measur while, by my silence, I should receive a tre sure, which I might, by good manageme retain for ever undetected. Thus, I decided

the latter course; and, at the end of a month of unutterable happiness, I married! Fatal ct! I have scarcely enjoyed a moment of anarent tranquillity since, in which the dread 'discovery has not risen up before me like fend. Every smile, every caress, from my wr Ellen, has seemed a reproach to me. 'Your kindness, sir, has cut me to the heart; ile the contemplation of my child, which s introduced into a wicked world loaded th its parent's sin, distracted me. I have en tempted to forsake this place for ever, to now aside my fictitious appellation, and to sounce my only hours of unstable felicity, t I could not, Mr. Vernon; I loved her too all to resign her, at once, to distress the most rrible, and I feared to add another to the u total of my crimes; and thus have conused here, until the hour of retribution has rived, and I am taken in my own trap. For Jown fate, I care little. I have tasted the oney of my design; therefore, must not obat to the correcting bitter. I shall die, and scape ignominy; but Ellen, how will she enbre it! Good heavens! what a wretch I am! What can I do? Mr. Vernon, tell me what I can do?"

A sigh so deep escaped from the good man

ere he replied, that Hamilton started, a rated anxiously at him, fearing his feeling had been the violently strained by the formula harman his emotion, and said, "There has been that you can do now, Mr. Harman his cut the past."

And what is that, dear sir?" eagerly in regard the other. "I feel capable of anythms here hereit, even now. Ten thous it has I have already settled upon heram the wint would you recommend farths

This yet should direct your thought travel, and spend your final hours in present and prayer," returned Mr. Vernon, st

Think not Ellen wants your bounty, writings are too serious to admit of remunt, in and I must say, my surprise is excite to offer. I shall not, and I hope she not consent under any circumstances, to description from the author of her fall."

Name Mr. Vernon." returned Charles, the some number to worldly considerations and should not induence your actions it have to ber temporal advantage; there has no hope you will reconsider this subj

All Charles's arguments proved unsuc

tion of refusing the settlement for Ellen, and he at length desisted in despair; and, after raving dictated a letter to his father, which he streated Mr. Vernon to put into the hands of In. Hamilton, or Mortimer Delmar, should e not live to see them on the following mornng, gave his attention to preparations for his wful change. With characteristic piety, Mr. femon administered every available consolaion afforded by the christian religion, and had be satisfaction of seeing that his efforts were 10t thrown away; for by degrees, the unhappy man became composed, and, after some time, reexperienced a temporary relief to his sufferings from an opiate. The clergyman then left him, to return to his favorite Ellen, whose faintings, though somewhat less death-like. still continued, and the tear of agony was seen wall as he hung over the unconscious girl. whose life, "begun in sin," seemed fated to end in shame; for he scarcely expected her to be restored to him. Indeed he was not sure hat he wished it, for how could be anticipate my portion of happiness being hers, with "hopes sapped-name blighted," and, without it where were the value of existence?

CHAPTER III.

The offspring of his wayward youth, When he betrayed Bianca's truth.

BYRON.

It is now requisite, for the information of readers, to go back a little in our narrative, explain the cause of Mortimer's abrupt de ture from the Metropolis, and also that of being so deeply affected by receiving Hamilton's address at the banker's.

During his absence from England, he learnt, by means of his friend Sir Ge Heron's letters from his family, that a pe named Hargrave had insinuated himself the favour of Mr. Vernon; but, as Lady H had not visited the north, during the absof her son, this account was vague, and mentioned by Sir George by chance, served, nevertheless, to make an impression

Delmar's mind, and to raise a fear for Ellen's happiness at the moment, which vanished, by degrees, when he reflected on the tender friend she possessed in Mr. Vernon. He remembered, also, that months might have intervened since this person had been at Claybrook, and the danger, if indeed any existed, unavoidable. A few months would find him again in England, when he determined to go into Westmoreland.

With this determination, he returned home, where, as we have seen, his sister's situation roused his immediate indignation. He had heard, from various quarters on the Continent, no very satisfactory accounts of Charles, and had more than once doubted if such a man, as he was represented, were calculated to make a good husband; but, as no complaints from home reached his ear, his generous nature tempted him to discredit what he heard. On discovering the neglect Maria endured, all these tales rose before him, and a dark and ill-defined suspicion took possession of his mind, terminated, as we have shewn, by prompt measures for clucidation.

His distress and alarm may therefore be conceived, when his search was concluded by discovering Mr. Hamilton was to be written to under cover, to Mr. Hargrave, Claybrook, Westmoreland!

"Could Hamilton and Hargrave be the same person?" he asked himself. "Could Hargrave have married Ellen? Could—" but he scarcely dare reflect on the long train of crime which his forebodings conjured up; and, half distracted, by anger and apprehension, he had returned to Henley.

After having communicated the result of his journey to his father and sister, with a portion of his fears, he entreated the latter to let him go to her husband, and ascertain the whole truth. Amidst all her distress, Mrs. Hamilton was still herself, and, although greatly indisposed, she resolved not to trust any one u take up her cause alone. She foresaw that, i the supposition of Charles's inconstancy wer unhappily confirmed, her hopes of conjuga comfort would be at once destroyed; yet sh could never have confidence in his conduc until the fact of his crime were disprove Some days were consumed in consideration when Mortimer declared that the welfare of dear friend demanded his presence, and the since Maria would not avail herself of his a sistance, he should leave Henley. Thus fin ng that her delay availed little, Mrs. Hamilton agreed to accompany him, while Lord Fitz Eustace, against his son's wish, determined to go also.

They arrived in due time at F—, whence they failed in learning anything concerning Mr. Hargrave to satisfy them; and the bewildered Mrs. Hamilton insisted on going, in person, immediately to Claybrook, where a few enquiries were enough to satisfy them Mr. Hargrave and Charles were, in reality, the same. The consequences we have already related.

Mrs. Hamilton had passed the interval, before the return of her brother to F—, in the greatest mental distress, scarcely daring to reflect upon his reason for remaining at Claybrook, and alarmed, in the highest degree, for its issue; in which Lord Fitz Eustace participated, for they were equally well acquainted with Mortimer's inflexibility.

His lordship deeply sympathised in the dreadful discovery which their journey had produced, for, though his fears for the affection of Charles and Maria had for some time been awakened, yet he had not allowed his suspicious to range near the truth. Nor had be the least idea Hamilton had proved himself so

uteriv mest that the return of his daugh from Thereick, whither he was prevented: community his collisen by the represent tions of Moranes, who dared not introdu me so user hared to the ill-fated Mr. Verno Besties in a mis time, he had careful evoluted informing his father of the existent n' Ellen, to to its knowledge of her birth an recovery indexing that such a dis thesize made talk tend to render him uness " I remarkable to former events, and also b we reasone if being humiliated in the eye it in init sin. In pursuance of this desire w some Loci Fix Exstace and himself morti former former beimer had entreated Marie To maintain a regard silence on their affinity to Ther which his associated and agitated sister voi repailly promised. "If, my dear Maria," ie she is he was about to conduct her to the ramage, after having detected her husband a the recovery, must it must be known that this universalize guil as his child. I am the one t say so though. I kervently hope I may b spared the train of so doing."

This injunction she adhered implicitly to indeed it was scarcely needed; for, independent of the delicacy of the subject from which

she would naturally shrink, her thoughts were wholly absorbed for the moment by Charles's conduct, and her own situation. She knew it was entirely her own act to attend her brother northward, notwithstanding his remonstrances, and those of her father, to the contrary. She was determined to ascertain herself the truth or falsity of her husband's estrangement; yet, no sooner was she convinced, by occular demonstration, of the fact, than her strength gave way, and she yielded to her unfeigned sorrow with a woman's weakness. She mourned Charles's criminality, and her own desertion, with the greatest poignancy, to which was added anxiety for Mortimer, as the hours advanced, and he came not. Eight, nine, and ten o'clock struck; he had not arrived. She consulted her father's looks, and, reading in them a corresponding uneasiness, was beginning to express her apprehensions of his delay, when his well-known voice from below struck upon her ear, and in a moment after he entered.

"You are later than we expected, Mortimer," said Lord Fitz Eustace, as his son sat down without speaking.

"I was unexpectedly detained, sir," said Mortimer calmly.

"And what have you done at this brook? Is the villain still at liberty?

"I have not taken any steps to arr my lord; but he will remain at the to-night. I have ventured to say, Ma continued to his sister, "that you will to-morrow, since he desires to speak w Was I wrong in so doing?"

"Certainly not, my dearest brother father and you think it right I should But will Charles come here?" rejoin Hamilton, with evident agitation.

"No, I settled that you should go to "Was that kind, Mortimer?" she : proachfully.

"It cannot be otherwise unforture replied the brother, "or I should no permitted it."

Maria looked at him earnestly, as rejoined composedly, "Mortimer, I a by the distress on your countenance thing important has occurred; tell m said with more urgency, as she obschange upon his face, "tell me, if yo raised your hand against my husband."

"As I live, no, Maria!" replied he s
"but Hamilton is ill; and I knew;
well to refuse his demand."

She pressed his hand tenderly, as she said, "You did well; but I trust he is not in danger. What is the matter with him? Shall I not go to-night?"

"He will be better after he has unburthened his mind to you, Maria. But do not ask me more to-night; we have both gone through enough business for one day; and, if you please, the carriage shall be at the door at eight o'clock in the morning. He does not expect us now; besides, it is late, and you, my sweet sister, will require rest, to prepare you for the painful interview."

"Alas!" said Maria weeping bitterly, "I know not why, but I fear you are deceiving me, Mortimer. I have always had implicit confidence in your word; but something tells me that you know more than you dare communicate; do you fear me?"

"My dear Maria," said her father, "you distress your brother and yourself, also, by what you are saying. Can you not depend on him?"

"I can most firmly," replied Mrs. Hamilton, smiling faintly, as she looked affectionately in Mortimer's face; "and I will prove it to you."

Definite of the amount of the fact that her confidence who are so recurred. Although he had a few times are comfortate when the times are also as was more comfortate when the times are arrived his lordship to the confidence of the confidence are also as a recognition of the confidence of the confide

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notes to necessarily. I think Charles would not use to necessarily. I think Charles would not use to necessarily my visit. Were he so that I would go to see him placed in the maintenance of pastice, where he ought to beyond I meand to hear his infernal avowal."

"Most probably he will not see you, sir;" sgain pressed Mortimer, not a little alarmed lest he should persist in his determination.—
"Under his circumstances, his natural feelings will be to relate anything he may wish to communicate to as few as possible."

"You seem very unwilling I should accomany you, Mortimer; it is strange you should lace an obstacle before me at every turn: can ou not say at once why I am to do your idding? Young persons, now a-days, think ley know much better than their parents, I elieve."

"My lord," replied Mortimer, firmly, but espectfully, "I grieve much that my anxiety of you should have excited your displeasure: ut I am under the necessity of repeating that hope you will not go with us. An obstacle would gladly avoid specifying must prevent."

"You are enigmatical to-night; but I am it to be silenced so easily as your sister; so, iless you give me a good reason, I shall not ler my intention."

Mortimer hesitated a moment, and then said, ittribute not blame to me, my lord, if what a force me to say should be unwelcome to

THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE I SETTLE FROM RICHORD SCHOOL SETTLE IN HAVE YOU THE HALLS IN VETTICA!

Line: First Easther started violently as repeated a Vermila. Yes: I do recollect in pleasure. Viation 1877.

- The restor of Chybrock is so called both and this day forbal your entrance and house.
- "Err the guil. Mirtin er?" enquired father, experit, which is the girl? the of the Jane Vermin?"

Moramer signed in the affirmative.

- " When and now did you learn this?"
- "Battere I lest the country, sir, from rector's own hips."
 - "And why dri you not tell me?"
 - " Need you ask, my dear father?"
- "Scarcely, indeed, Mortimer, I know affection and integrity; yet, I would you been less solicitous to spare me, for I long deplored my crime, and sought, by a means in my power, to discover poor J child, that I might, at least, do what I for her, to repair the wrong I did her may bose death I long since ascertained. is the person with whom she resides?"

ther's father-in-law, sir." ie has, indeed, cause to close his it me," replied his Lordship, bitit tell me how you learnt all

ir and succinct manner, Delmar introduction at the cottage, careng what he thought would inflict as also the detail of his unfortu-As soon as he had concluded, said, "Good Heaven! Mortimer, aware of the double crime he ted?"

ir."

wonder, then, that he has laid ls on himself. A perjured villain! ny dear Maria should thus suffer it's crimes-would I could suffer since I cannot remove the cause of tchedness, I must see what can be ieve it. You must be my deputy, v. in this sad affair. My honour ess is safer in your hands than my ly believe; therefore, make what rms you please with this unfortusince I am unable to act for "Your confidence is most gratifying, deaf father, and I assure you it shall not be misplaced, but, I fear no pecuniary considerations will influence Mr. Vernon, to forget, or forgive."

"It must be tried, Mortimer." His son was silent; and Lord Fitz Eustace added, "Our dear Maria will deeply feel this blow."

"I fear so, indeed," said the brother, "but she has more strength of mind at her command than the fragile Ellen—for her I tremble. Heavens! what must be Hamilton's feelings, when he ponders on the wreck, the devastation he has wrought in the hearts of two beings, so good, so pure! Surely the reproaches of his conscience must be punishment enough. I dare not think of his wickedness, it distracts me!"

"If you are thus moved," said his father, gloomily, "what must I endure, who see, in the whole event, the stroke of retribution!"

"Pardon my complaints, my father; I would not wound you," replied Mortimer, as Lord Fitz Eustace gave him his hand, "but I am deeply hurt."

"A night's repose will do us all good," rejoined his Lordship, as he rose from the

seat he had occupied the last few minutes, "and the morning, I fancy, will again call for all your energy."

"It shall not be wanting, sir," replied the foung man, with a look of firm determination, and the father and son separated for the night.

Lord Fitz Eustace, lest alone, ruminated long on his son's communication, and keenly did he feel the annihilation of his ambitious He had figured to himself the projects. radiant Mrs. Hamilton, transformed into the brilliant Countess, surrounded by rank, wealth, and splendour; he had anticipated the parent's proud satisfaction, he knew that he had sacrificed her happiness for aggrandizement, and now he found that his hopes were all crushed at once; his name insulted and degraded by means of his former folly. A crime, of many years' standing, now brought to light to overwhelm him with shame. In an ill-fated hour he had loved, or fancied he loved, Jane Vernon, and, as already detailed, had overcome her virtue. The first excess of admiration, however, past, he had discarded her, probably for novelty; and, with heartless cruelty, had paid her passage to her native country, to rid himself of a troublesome burthen. Money he had offered, but, that the fallen creature had refused with indignation; and abject misery and distress, closed by disease and death, were the consequences.

True, it was, the Baron told his son, he had endcavoured, on his return to England, to repair his baseness, but, the lapse of years i...3 destroyed all trace of the mother, or her child, and he speedily relinquished the search, thinking, most likely, both were numbered with the dead. This night had removed the From the lips of his only son, Lord Fitz Eustace had heard that the child of the wretched Mrs. Vernon yet lived-had lived to be his curse! to be the innocent cause of his degradation! He saw himself caught in a net of his own weaving, and bitter indeed were his reflections! "How," he asked himself, "could be again face the world! the cold, calculating world, after this affair was known, and, known it must be, soon, in a society where the misfortunes of others are ever a grateful topic of discussion. Would not the finger of pity and scorn be pointed at one, heretofore sensible only of the eye of admiration, or of envy? Could he endure that? He would leave the country, would quit icty where he was so well known, and vour, by the offer of gold—almost any within the bounds of moderation, to the discovery of his affinity with the mate Ellen." He had observed that her had not appeared to enter zealously s views for compensating her for his conduct, and he resolved to communist intentions himself, by letter, to Mr., being unwilling to explain his narrow of Mortimer, whom he knew to be all ity, and he had that fear of his son a great mind must ever unconsciously over one of less vigour.

his mind thus made up, on this point, dship's thoughts again reverted to the situation of Mrs. Hamilton. He over her, and his own expectations destroyed, and, with just indignation, ewed Hamilton's conduct. Thus, the as far advanced ere he sought repose, last mental exclamation was, "Alas! rnon, thou art amply avenged!"

CHAPTER IV.

Sar. — My gentle, wrong'd Zarina!

I am the very slave of circumstance

And impulse—borne away with every breath!

SCANT was the measure of repose enjoy by the brother and sister; each tormented thoughts of the past and coming days. Meanilton, broken down by illness and anxiet passed the greater part of the night in test while Mortimer, after indulging his varietier and indignant feelings some hours, sinto an uneasy slumber, in which the harming events, which had so recently taken plagain passed before him, and he awoke a convulsive start to uneasy reality.

is pillow; firmly he prepared to attend, and to apprise her of her husband's r. For a few moments he saw his; and Lord Fitz Eustace then told him n of writing to the rector, in which the man readily acquiesced.

Hamilton entered the carriage calm illected, but with an air indicative of pental suffering that her affectionate nion almost repented having deferred rming intelligence, and half the disthey had to traverse was accomplished ne could summon courage to inform her appalling truth. Having, however, it to her, a few minutes ere they reached estination, he was happy to find that ard it tranquilly, though a death-like s covered her face. For an instant. peared on the point of fainting; but, by rt, she recovered herself, and then said, not surprised, Mortimer; your behaast night conveyed much more than, s, you intended. I was sure you had ing on your mind beside what you chose nunicate: and I need scarcely say I ted that silence unfavourably. Do not , my dearest brother. I am prepared

to hear anything now. I trust I can meet Charles as I ought; and that your kind consideration for me will not have caused us to be too late. An idea of having failed in my last sad duty would embitter my life. Are you satisfied we shall yet be in time? I few your delay was dangerous."

"Nay, Maria, banish that thought. Immediate dissolution was deemed improbable, or I would have counselled your visit last night." She pressed his hand convulsively in her's in silence; and in a short time they were at the cottage. Delmar led the trembling Mrs. Hamilton into the sitting-room, saying "You will stay here, Maria, will you not, until I have been to Hamilton?"

"No, no; I must see him directly. Do not leave me, Mortimer. I cannot stay alone here."

"It is impossible, my poor Maria," replied he tenderly, endeavouring at the same time to free himself from her grasp; "he must be prepared for the interview. Where is Maria," he continued to the servant.

"In Mr. Hamilton's room, sir; but he know of your arrival, and wishes you to go to him "And my husband?" enquired Maria wil ly, shuddering as she spoke; "how is he?" "More easy, ma'am, than in the fore part of the night; since Mr. Brownlow gave him something to sleep him."

"There, Maria, you can make any enquiries while I go to the rector; fear not, I will fetch you soon."

Mrs. Hamilton yielded, and, seating herself passively, said "I am satisfied, Mortimer, he is still alive. I must submit."

Thus freed, Mortimer entered the chamber of death, where he found Hamilton still under the influence of the opiate; but a very short interval had passed before he opened his eyes, and, seeing Delmar, made an effort to address him; but, at first, was unable from the supefaction of his senses. Mortimer, seeing his attempt, said immediately, "Do not distress yourself, Mr. Hamilton, I will wait as long as you please."

"Maria?" said Charles in a tone of interrogation. "Is here," returned Delmar; " and only waits your summons to attend you."

"Bless her! I have not described it;" he said mournfully; and, after a momentary pause, pursued, as he fixed his eyes on Mortimer's doquent countenance, "Can she forgive me?"

"That question she shall answer for herself, Hamilton. Shall I fetch her?"

"Not yet, not yet. I must have time to think. If I thought she would forgive me, I would not he situte, but—"

"Fear not. Maria, said the brother; "I will answer for her generosity." He made an advance towards the door, as he spoke, and, meeting with no opposition from the invalid, he soon found himself again with his sister.

Mrs. Hamilton trembled violently as he led her to the room, but she did not speak;—her strong pressure of his arm assured him she was much agitated. On opening the door, she quitted her brother's side, who followed her, and, advancing unsupported to the sick bed, took the passive hand of her husband as it lay on the cover-lid in both of her's, and said in the soft tones of kindness, "Dear Charles, do yet feel better?"

Hamilton looked anxiously at Mortimes, who, immediately comprehending his glance of enquiry, replied "She knows all, Hamilton."

He looked his thanks, and, returning Maria' pressure, said "Then I need not deceive yo with false hopes, Maria; neither is there as

occasion for me to tell you how I have been reduced to this state. I know that in a few hours I shall be past all pain, and, therefore, I am truly grateful for your prompt arrival. It is kind, very kind, to come to me."

"Could you doubt my doing so, Charles, when I heard of your dreadful situation!"—
The tears rolled down her face as she spoke:
"How could I fail doing so after what has passed?"

"How could I flatter myself my injured wife would condescend to enter the precincts of my criminality? Even now I dare not look at you. Alas! how you must despise and hate me!" His voice failed, and for an instant he gasped for breath.

"I pity you," said Mrs. Hamilton; "I have come to do all I can for you; so tell me, Charles, why you sent for me."

"To own my wickedness, to sue for pardon, and to bless one whom I curse myself for having so foully treated," returned he with an ineffectual effort at composure, for his voice shook, and his lip quivered, as he said the last words.

Mrs. Hamilton made no reply, for her emotion choked her words; but she pressed the hand she still held to her lips, and in so doi bedewed it with tears of grief.

"Maria, my wife!" pursued he, "comp vourself; my time is short, and I have can you too much sorrow, already, not to gri for this additional pang I have given vou. entreat you to be calm, for I do not merit tears of virtue. Mr. Vernon, Maria, has b the depository of my repentance and my ta from him you will learn all that has occur in this delusive spot; but there are circu stances which have taken place elsewhe regarding yourself alone, still undisclosed, to acknowledge which I have required to: vou. Much as I fear your displeasure may augmented, I cannot refrain from owning! villany, since your forgiveness will be inco plete without you know the extent of I faults. Delmar, are we alone?"

"Maria and myself are your only companions," replied Mortimer.

"It is well; give me that cordial, befor begin."

Mrs. Hamilton immediately did so, a after a slight hesitation, from the intensity his pain, and a deep drawn sigh, he so "Mortimer Delmar, let me avail myself

this opportunity of thanking you for procuring me the satisfaction of seeing your sister once nore. I scarcely merit such indulgence, bough I dared to crave it, and your kindness till not be unrewarded."

"He could not do less than fulfil your wish, harles," replied Mrs. Hamilton, "in conideration of my comfort, as well as yours, for should have been deeply hurt that anything a my power had been neglected to make you say."

Mortimer joined his sister in this declaration; and Charles said, "You are both kindtoo kind-much more so than I deserve, or uticipated; which, I think, makes me more reluctant to lay myself open to you, and I feel bow much happiness I have wantonly thrown away. I believe the utmost felicity was at my disposal, on my marriage, since I convinced, from what I know of your excellence, Maria, that you would have been an affectionate wife to me, although, at the period of our union, I do not believe love had my lodgement in our hearts. Nav. do not berrupt me," he continued, seeing her about a speak, "I know what you would say, but will be in vain to try to persuade me that VOL. II.

aught but policy consummated the allia We were never attached to each other i degree necessary to warrant domestic com and those who impelled the marriage much to answer for; but, with the error others I have little to do, and will not to point them out; God knows, I has uniciency of individual sin to occupy thoughts! You are too sensible of the ne I manifested towards you, in the succe months, to require any recapitulation. the blame was all on my side, for I sout please myself alone, plunging wildly o proportion as I began to condemn my con

"In the second year of our marriage, saw Ellen Vernon: I was on my way to Glenartney's, when my carriage was turned, and I procured an asylum her cannot enter into particulars of my visi its consequences were, that I permitte passion to triumph over my reason and by marrying her. Accustomed to see thing subservient to my will, I coul controul my desires, though I feared making a dangerous experiment for the ment of happiness, which justly, he fatally, has been realized. Every att

every look, from you, Maria, since that time. has seemed a reproach to me, and I have many times tormented myself with the idea that your manner expressed distrust, fancying you must have discovered all. These sentiments, however, refer more particularly to a later period, for at first my delusion rendered me dead to every thing but pleasure, which, on my return to you, I pursued with redoubled vigour. I devoted all the time I could spare, consistent with my necessary concealment, to my new duties, and flattered myself I should not be detected. I will distress you no longer unnecessarily by a detail of all my subterfuges.

"Your constant round of amusement, your universal success in pleasing, first made me indulge an idea, at which I now tremble. Hating myself for my crimes, yet unable to extricate myself from my fatal imprudence, I saw you courted by the young—the gay—the fashionable. I saw you treading a path of excitement—I saw too that you had no cause to love me, and I dared to hope—Yes! I dared to hope that you might be so far worked apon by admiration, and my neglect, as to commit some indiscretion, by which I might

divest myself of a tie, which I felt I had disgraced."

Mrs. Hamilton started at this declaration, while Mortimer's cheek glowed with indignation; he forbore, however, to interrupt the tale, and Hamilton continued.

"When first the thought insinuated itself into my mind, I was alarmed, and dismissed it in haste; but it is astonishing with what rapidity the mind becomes accustomed, by contemplation, to circumstances from which we may turn with horror in the first instance By degrees, I was reconciled to this vile comsideration, and looked forward to its consummation with secret pleasure. Your conduct. however, was so consistent that I saw 10 chance of my wish being fulfilled, and I shunned you more and more as I felt the increase of my own baseness. This was the state of my feeling in the early part of the last season, which, like the two others, since our unhappy union, was dedicated to a which of pleasure." He paused, as if unable, or unwilling, to proceed, and, for a minute, perfect silence reigned in the apartment;2 suppressed sob from his wife roused him, and seeing that Mortimer laid his hand tenderly her arm, as if to lead her from the room, d, "Maria, do not leave me, in pity stay don me! I will go on as soon as pos-Oh! this pain! Good heavens! what I not give for ease."

o not fear, Hamilton, we will not go from you," said Delmar, seeing that his was too much agitated to reply at the nt. "I am sure Maria is solicitous to she deems her duty."

'hat a reproach that speech conveys!" ed Charles, in a mournful tone: "but wit is just; principle alone can guide nduct towards such as I am. Would it therwise; but, regret is vain now, therewill proceed at once to the point. At ne I was making up my mind to propose our hand, you may remember that ric Sinclair was introduced to you." Hamilton's cheek, at the name of the dragoon, was like crimson, her whole trembled, and she gasped for breath, ie chamber was too much darkened for es to observe her agitation, and her r, who watched her attentively, attriit to some distressing circumstance with he was unacquainted. Her husband went on: "Various circumstances n then think that you favoured him, quently, I both feared and hated his rival; but, after a time, he left Nott I obtained your hand, and quickly fo idea of your preference for him. again met last spring, times had altere no longer anything to dislike him f finding him a pleasant fellow, received my house, as a friend. Do not trer my poor Maria, I am not going to bla in touching on this subject, but, to how utterly unworthy I have been steady virtue. I threw you together ! means in my power, encouraged his. all times and seasons, and, I perceiv both you and Captain Sinclair were terms of the closest friendship. I lea you were frequently in society togeth strange to say, that, far from being dis I rejoiced at it, for I then dared to for realization of my project, abhorrent feelings of husbands in general, I own me a satisfaction in the expectation of vou as frail as myself."

"You cannot breathe a word ags sister," said Mortimer, in a low entrated indignation, "You dare not, vilis you are!"

io, Delmar, she is unimpeachable—would even I could say the same! I alone am -but let me conclude my humiliating My breath and courage begin to fail I took care to treat you with augmented ness, whenever I had an opportunity of with you, though, in general, I left you ly to yourself, hoping to give more fafor your being entrapped in my net. ever, as day after day passed and produced sult, and you continued to treat me with customary deference, I became more an-, more impatient, for the change I antici-. I thought my plan tardy, and I worried f. until I began to fear I should not sucwhich prompted me to watch my victims narrowly, to ascertain the real fact. I ently was at parties, unseen by you, when l not engaged to attend you, at which your conduct was such as to convince the fallacy of my anticipated triumph. mce ever guided you, as well as Sinand I quickly saw, that, however much served to be hated and despised, or other man to be loved or admired, you

were far too upright, too strong-minded, to be betrayed into evil. Sinclair's character, also, was one of such perfect integrity that I felt convinced my wicked projects must fall to the ground. I do not hesitate in declaring that I believe he entertained that tender regard for you, which a good man would feel for a young woman placed in your situation; perhaps even he, unconsciously felt sentiments bordering on love, but it was an affection which was too true to wish for gratification at the risk of the happiness of its object; which opinion was confirmed, by his removal to Ireland, as soon as his duty called him, doubtless with feelings of warmth and friendship, for his pretended friend's wife; but, with a disposition of mind, too noble-too generous-to harbour an idea which might prove dangerous to one like you -an idea he would scorn to indulge.

"He left you bright and guiltless as he found you—purified and refined by your trial, but me-your guilty, disappointed husband, a prey to every horrible reflection. I was racked with the thought of having committed this enormous crime, in vain, since you had neither succumbed to my demoniacal temptation; while I found myself sunk deeper into the abyss, into which I

itended to have plunged you. The whole fmy evil doings, of my dangers, of my y, seemed to pass in frightful review before ind's eve, and almost overwhelm me, and shed thought, as much as possible, during st of our stay in town. I endeavoured to ap my mind to see the unhappy girl I had ed no more, but to devote my valueless you; and by thus adding another crime fearful list, to conceal all from the world. that time, I loathed myself-I hated life, have almost feared that hell must be ed upon my forehead, so fiery has it felt! we sometimes thought of terminating an ace so insupportable to me; but I dared en consummate my eternal perdition by oul deed, and, for a brief space, I contiapparently more comfortable with you at Never, notwithstanding, had I been ٧. stched-I knew I was expected at Clay-; and, though I succeeded, for a little in restraining my inclination to be there, r, last September, announcing the birth randed child, put all my resolutions to I could not resist the appeal made by feared to return. Dark remorse, and awful forcbodings, have been my portion, until, at last, a heavy retribution has overtaken me, which is on the point of bearing me to an early grave! Hope, for the future, is almost extinguished in my breast, while that of the present is dependant on the forgiveness of those I have wronged.—Maria, will you not enable me to resign my cursed existence with less bitterness?"

The distressed Mrs. Hamilton endeavoured to rise from her chair, and to speak those words of comfort which her duty and kindness of heart prompted; but, though her pale lips moved for a moment, no sound was heard. She looked with a countenance indicative of deep grief for a moment upon her husband, who gazed anxiously in her pallid face, and, in the act of stretching out her hand, she suk back almost insensible. The delicacy of her health, the alarm she had undergone, united to the tension of her feelings, conspired to overcome her, and, though she contended with the weakness she condemned, she almost found herself overpowered. With a ready hand, Mortimer gave her some cordial, and. in alow tone, entreated her to leave the room, but she allowly expressed her disinclination; and, in a few minutes, hearing Charles earnestly demand "whether she thought his conduct unpardonable," she recovered herself, and took his hand, saying, "Charles, my husband, do not judge so of me. I will—I do forgive you may God, in his infinite goodness, accept your repentance!"

"Do I hear aright?" rejoined the dying man, as a momentary ray of pleasure gleamed in his eye. "Pronounce those blessed words wain. Oh! that I could hear them repeated matil I am no more! Speak to me, Maria."

Mrs. Hamilton's tears now flowed fast, and, ushe bent over the bed, she imprinted a kiss whis pallid brow, saying, as she did so, "If he repetition of what I have said can afford on any comfort, it shall be done. I will forive, and endeavour to forget, my wrongs. We are all sinners, Charles,—all we do is evil ontinually, and how can we hope for mercy heaven, unless we extend our forgiveness those who require it here?"

Hamilton's lip quivered for a moment, but sturned to Mortimer, saying, "You, Delmar, we already promised me oblivion of the ust, will you confirm it?" Mortimer hesitated,

and he added, "You cannot,—I see you not,—leave me, then. I shall not long curse to humanity. But, as a dying injunlet me intreat you to guard poor Ellen."

"Dearest Mortimer," interposed I "may I not plead for Charles? give his gratification he sues for—you will not be so relentless?"

The dark frown, which had marked the man's countenance, was slightly remove she spoke; and he answered, as he looker affectionately, "Of what strange reals is not woman's heart composed, the turn anger and wounded feeling into the ness and compassion. I own, my indige is extreme, nevertheless, Hamilton," he tinued, addressing him, at the same time ingout his hand, "nevertheless, I would deny what you request, for many reasons is my hand, if that will satisfy you, a Maria' sake, I bid you take the indulge pledges—I must not—"

"Do not express more," interrupted C grasping the proferred token of amity adding, in an interrogatory tone, "y not forget Ellen?"

"Forget her!" repeated Delmar, in

feeling, "heaven knows there is but ar of that. The claims of consanguie combined with too many agonising cences for me ever to forget."—Bitterly ite, as the vision of his former dream cross his mind; but quickly resuming il manner, he pursued, "No, Hamilton, t for her, since her individual claims will secure a brother's care. My dear he said, to Maria, "permit me to adu to retire, until you have, in some composed your spirits, you can then here if you wish it."

Mortimer," replied Mrs. Hamilton, ly "no; I will not leave him until—" itated, and her pale cheek was for a t overspread by a more deadly hue, looked the words she dreaded to nce.

til all is over, you would say, Maria," harles, who had overheard the half-I sentence, and completed it. "I know th; do not be afraid of speaking. May bless you for your kindness! Oh! but known how to estimate you!"—he ay no more: but, covering his eyes with d, sobbed audibly for a while, notwith-

standing his wife's kind consolations, Mortimer's remonstrances.

After having again ineffectually entre Mr. Vernon to allow him an interview Ellen, the wretched Hamilton permitted thoughts again to be led back to pr ration for his speedy change; and, dt the three succeeding hours, every mitigs to his sufferings was afforded him by the ful hand of Maria. She alone administered draught which was to lull his pain; she a wiped away the dews of death which h upon his brow, and smoothed his thorny low; in fact, she did more than many w have done; and, as a virtuous woman what she considered her duty. Charles ever been the cold indifferent husband had committed many offences, both or and secretly, against her; he had insulte had degraded, her; and, at first, she had inclined to be influenced by anger and wo ed pride: but she saw him abased, repen suffering, dying-and all the wrong was fo moment forgotten; and, with the tender of a woman, for crime and misery, she wat by his bed-side.

The good rector, although almost stur

by the calamity, still administered every comfort in his power; while Mortimer, unable to have an interview with Ellen from her continued illness, as he had intended, after having relieved Hamilton's mind in the manner we have just shewn, left the room, and, taking up his hat, walked slowly into the garden.

CHAPTER V.

Yet I'll look up.

My fault is past: but, oh! what form of prayer

Can serve my turn?

SHARSPEARE.

Delmar continued for some time to permeabulate the different paths surrounding the rectory, his mind racked by the bitter thought created by the late events, of which the avow of Hamilton's frustrated crime was not a slight cause of reflection. His heart glowed with pride and admiration, as he recalled the unqualified testimony of rectitude given to be beloved sister, by her husband, throughout the period of his ill conduct; and he deep lamented his father's fatal ambition in a pousing her to a man for whom she had litter though the surrounding the surrounding that the surrounding the surrounding that the surrounding the surrounding that the surrounding the surrounding the surrounding that the surrounding that the surrounding the surrounding that the surrounding

r no affection. "Alas! my poor sister," he aid mentally, "how terrible must have been four struggle! How doubly exemplary your conduct if, as I now suspect, your heart was in the possession of another—one, perhaps, capable of appreciating your worth, though he may be too poor and too proud to offer his hand to the daughter of the wealthy Baron Fitz Eustace." Ellen, too, occupied his thoughts for awhile, and thence they turned to Heron Castle, to sir George; and last, though not least, to the frigid Beatrice. He looked earnestly towards this point of the compass, in which the home of his bosom friend lay, and her for whom he had felt a first, a real, and still tender, affection. Though miles distant, he fancied, as he stood and gazed, that the Castle, with tique towers, was before him, and that he Could see Beatrice; not, indeed, as he had Erst beheld her,—with a countenance where-On innocence and content were depicted, but Pale and sad as she had appeared the last Part of bis visit, nearly four years before; and something told him that he was the cause of the change, for, during his companionship with her brother, many little circumstances had

warranted the belief that he had misconstrued her former conduct, and induced him to vield to the hope that she loved him; and had he not felt it incumbent upon him to settle this affair with Hamilton, he would, long ere this, have hastened to assure himself of the truth. He was conscious sir George had penetrated the secret of his heart; but, with a delicate forbearance, had never referred, in the remotest degree, to the subject; though when they had parted on their landing, he had intimated his hopes of soon again seeing him at his house. This Mortimer had promised to do, but which subsequent events had prevented, and he neither could nor would see the Herons under He imagined the present circumstances. family were still in London, where his friend had expected to meet his cherished relations; consequently he recalled Heron Castle to his mind, and enjoyed a satisfaction in its vicinity, only from a recollection of her whom he had last seen there. Deeply he sighed as the vision faded away, and he turned to re-commence his locomotion. The sight of the rectory recalled him to the stern reality—the sad situation of its imates, and for another half how he continued in unmolested solitude.

He was thinking of returning to rejoin Maria in Hamilton's chamber, when he saw Mr. Vernon's old scrvant, Margaret, with a face expressive of her mental distress, advancing hurriedly up the garden towards the spot where he stood.

"You are wanted within, sir," she said before she reached him. "My master desired me to beg you would come to Mr. Har—Hamilton, I mean, sir."

"Has any change taken place?" enquired Mortimer.

"Yes, sir; Doctor Brownlow fears he will not live long; and the lady, sir, looks very Pale and alarmed."

"I will come instantly, Margaret; but tell he first what you think of your mistress. Is she better?"

The old woman shook her head, saying, as the tears started afresh into her eyes—"Ah! Mr. Delmar, it seems to me she will never be better in this world. She has received her death blow, poor dear! this shock, I know, will kill her. Indeed, indeed, sir, it almost breaks my old heart to see her sit motionless with her beautiful eyes fixed on the child."

"Have the fits, then, left her? that is favourable."

"They have, indeed, left her, sir, but she a has not spoken since, neither does she seem to understand any thing that is said to her.

Wish, sir, you would talk to her; perhaps, a s you used to be fond of her, she might pa attention to what you said, and rouse herself.

"Do you really think, Margaret, I could d
her any good?"

"Yes, indeed, Mr. Delmar, I do; but if your could get her out of this melancholy way, it would give me hope."

"It shall be tried, my good woman, it shall be tried," answered Mortimer, thoughtfully.

"As soon as possible, I will come to her.

Watch her carefully," he continued, as he paused for an instant, at the house door "watch her carefully; for, as you say, I love her, and no being on earth grieves more than myself at the desolation I have unhappily been the means of creating here."

"I will, I will, sir, for her own sake, lealone every thing else," replied the faithful creature, wiping her eyes with the corner of her apron, as Mortimer turned toward Hamilton's room.

On entering, he found his sister, with forced composure, supporting Charles's head for Mr. Vernon beside her; while Mr. Brownlow

stood on the other side of the bed, holding in his hand a glass, which he was raising to the parched lips of his patient. Hamilton scarce tasted the beverage, but, turning to Mortimer, said, in a feeble voice, "Delmar, come near." He did so, and he continued in the same tone, which was so low, that it was with difficulty his attentive listener could catch the words, "In my will, I have provided for Ellen and the child—will you see that they enjoy the stipend? Mr. Vernon has refused to let them be benefitted by me, but, if you will, you can make him take it as a gift from yourself. Promise me this, to soothe my last pang."

Mortimer, at the first moment, felt inclined to refuse, for he looked upon this proposition is emanating from an intention of remunetating the unhappy girl for the evil Charles had done her—evil which he felt, in unison with the clergyman, to be irreparable, and his indignant spirit scorned, like him, the price Hamilton would willingly have paid for his selfish gratification. The idea of Ellen's owing independence to the loss of her fair fame could not, for an instant, find an advocate in him; but, on second thoughts, he determined to set the dying man's mind at rest, though he

would not exactly give him the promise he required; he replied, therefore, "Fear not, Hamilton, I will see that nothing is wanting to render her as comfortable as her best friends can expect her to be now——"

A faint colour mounted into Hamilton's face as Mortimer pronounced the last word. perhaps, with rather more bitter emphasis than he intended. His look told that he keenly felt the hint; and, heaving a deep sigh, he closed his eyes, and, for a quarter of an hour, no sound was heard in the room, but the laboured breathing of the penitent. His attendants contemplated the rapid approaches of the arch enemy in mournful silence; the trembling Maria crept closer and closer to her brother, who, placing his arm round her agitated frame, pressed her affectionately to him, just as Charles, who had already, within the last two or three hours, complained of cold, now requested additional covering; this being done, he said, with difficulty, "I am going, Maria; my limbs are dead. Oh! how cold I amput more upon me-give me something to drink." These demands being complied with is silence, he continued, at intervals, "Do not tell Ellen of my wickedness. Mr. Vernon, spare her-spare her."

"I will, I will," said he, sorrowfully, "be assured, I will; she shall never hear it from me."

A ray of satisfaction passed over his countenance; and, in a few minutes, he again spoke, "Pray for me, Mr. Vernon, I have been very wicked! Maria! Delmar! pray for me!"

The three individuals, thus addressed, did not require a second entreaty; each knelt by the bed, and the rector, in a voice which now and then shook slightly, from his emotion, offered up a fervent prayer for the repentant sinner. Hamilton's lips moved in supplication, and a smile of hope played round his mouth for an instant, as they rose. "I am much happier now," he said. "May Heaven bless you all! Give me your hand, Maria—I am going—kiss me, my injured wife. Mr. Vernon,—Delmar, forgive. Oh God! forgive me!

His voice sunk, though his lips yet moved, he gasped for breath, fixed his last earthly look upon the grey-haired old man he had so foully deceived, and, after a momentary struggle, the erring spirit of the misguided Charles Hamflton deserted its frail tenement! The soul mounted to the regions above, and t'body, the prison-house of the nobler part man's existence, lay still in death!

Mrs. Hamilton, having acted almost mechacally as her husband had desired, hung over him in undisguised alarm; she heard his last word—she struggled to repress her feelings, but, as his soul took its aerial flight, she reeled, and would have fallen to the ground had not Mortimer received her in his arms, and borne her from the room.

It would require a far abler pen than that which has attempted to write this tale, to pourtray the state in which the subsequent hours were spent at the rectory. The violent death of any individual must, at all times, be a most painful circumstance; but it is doubly so when the unhappy being is one with whom we have been on terms of intimacy, and when impelled, by crime, to attempt the destruction of a life given for some wise purpose by at all-merciful Creator.

CHAPTER VI.

The happiness of human kind Consists in rectitude of mind. A will subdued to reason's sway. And passions practis'd to obey; An open and a generous heart, Refin'd from selfishness and art.

WILKIE.

In the cursory life of Charles Hamilton, we see the evil effects of selfishness, and the danger of the first crime; since it invariably leads to the commission of innumerable others, of by for greater magnitude. The gratification of his vanity, alone, had induced him to yield to his father's wishes, in regard to his marriage; he had never felt any thing more than regard for Maria, but his friends had constantly pointed out her excellence—her rank, her wealth, desirable. He had found, even before he was aware of it, that he was expected to YOL. 11.

make her an offer of his hand; he heard on every side congratulations on his good fortune, and, though little disposed to sacrifice his liberty at the altar of Hymen, was caught, unconsciously, by the dazzle of such an alliance, and when he thought of escape, it was too late.-Every one considered the thing as settled, and he was drawn into the belief that he was a most enviable person. He was gratified being envied, at being the successful rival & so many suitors for the hand of Maria, and b married, under a mistaken idea that he "loved and was beloved again." A few months ha dispelled that phantom—his error was soot apparent; but he could have been happ enough in the self-indulgence he constant pursued, had he not seen Ellen Vernon; b might have continued upright, in fact, had b not met with temptation.

Who would not plead the same excuse, were such admissible? But little would be on merit in doing right, had we no evil to comban no trials to undergo. Temptation is placed if our path that we may deserve reward or put ishment, according to our deeds—that we may rise superior to the struggle, and come fort from the ordeal purified and refined.

Charles Hamilton was tried, and allowed himself to be vanquished, almost without a struggle. He had never denied himself anything—he had made all subservient to his will. and, therefore, when he loved—desperately loved, for the first time, he could not restrain his self-indulgence. Had he been virtuously inclined, he would have combated his growing attachment for a beautiful and innocent girl, when he knew, however unfortunately for his tappiness, that he was married, and that, both for her and himself, it was dangerous to be together. He knew, from the first instant he mw her, that he could not in honor make her his wife, and, if he could not resist temptation, be should have fled from it. He felt every day more tender regard for his lovely nurse, and he knew that he was tampering with her, yet, selfish, heartless monster, he could deliberately contemplate the destruction of one of nature's fairest works! Shame and fear deterred him from this open villany, however, though nothing else could; and, terrified at his own thoughts, for one short moment, virtue prevailed, and he left her!

But why recapitulate his wavering career? Weakness, self-gratification, folly and cruelty, marked it throughout, until he married victim. Let us then ask, was he conte Did he procure the felicity he sought? he enjoy that peace of mind which he cover No, he was fifty times more wretched that had ever been before. It is true, he passome transient hours of exquisite delight, even these were corroded by the reflection his guilt. He was obliged to walk hand hand with falsehood, in order to screen villany, while fear closely trod in his stembittering his existence. Mental anx and self-reproach, combined to render miserable—and dear, indeed, was the pricipaid for his conduct.

We little think, in the hour of temptation the consequences entailed by a first finite invariably, a second is necessary to avoid discovery of it; and, like Hamilton, we are on to our destruction, through the labyring sin. Had he withstood love's earliest at the would have escaped from an act we conducted him, by a tissue of consequent and sorrows, to a sudden and dreadful de death by his own hand! That fearful c by which every law, both human and dis outraged—at which nature trembles, as

which, heaven's wrath must surely light upon the head of the wretched being who thus rids himself of an existence he has no right to terminate!

And what does the suicide hope to gain by the act? Exemption from dangers and difficulties he has neither virtue, nor courage to support. But can he suppose that his case is rendered less terrible by self-destruction? By these means he certainly resigns all earthly cares, he deprives himself of every hope of atonement by prayer, supplication, or possible amendment—he rushes unprepared into eternity, and stands before his offended Maker loaded with all his unrepented sins, madly expecting to find, in death, the oblivion his errors forbid in lite!

Surely this is far more fearful; and hal the weak, the wicked Hamilton, considered for an instant what he was about to do, he would have recoiled with horror from adding to the black catalogue of his misdeeds!

The unfortunate Charles's letter to his father was immediately despatched, with another from Mortimer, by express, to Merton Hall, briefly detailing the distressing circumstances which had occurred, and requesting Mr. Ha-

milton either to set out without loss of for the house of mourning, to take the man ment of the funeral of his son; or, in the of his being unable or unwilling to cor to delegate some one to act in his stead the mean time, he assured the sorrowing p that he would take care every necessary should be performed. As soon as possible this was concluded, he removed his wide sister to her carriage, with the intentic accompanying her back to F-, wh lord Fitz Eustace, he doubted not, would be anxious to depart; for he felt that it: be both painful and unpleasant to his fe to remain in the vicinity of Ellen's abode, the circumstances, past as well as pre which were connected with her, were hamiliating.

By Mr. Vernon's desire, Delmar under every arrangement relating to the decer and promised that he would return to rectory that night, as the old man was une at the moment, from infirmity and sorroany exertion; and to have left him and adopted daughter entirely to the care of vants, however trust-worthy they migh Mortimer thought would be most un'

Mrs. Hamilton also wished him to stay in the house, at least, until the arrival of her father-in-law, and, therefore, willingly consented to his leaving her with lord Fitz Eus-Accordingly, the brother and sister reached F- towards seven o'clock in the evening; whence, after some deliberation, it was determined that his lordship, with Mrs. Hamilton, should set off for Merton on the following morning, whence they could proced to the Continent or Ireland, as might be judged most desirable: for lord Fitz Eustace had resolved to remove, for a time at least, from a country where his pride and ambition had received so severe a shock, and where also he was conscious of having acted an ungenerous part, in respect to the child of the ill-fated Jane Vernon.

A few years' absence would deaden the world's recollection of the affair, should it transpire; and then he might again mingle with the host of acquaintance, the unthinking portion of mankind. He hoped, however, that his letter to Mr. Vernon, in which he had offered to provide most liberally for Ellen, would completely silence the promulgation of her relationship to him; indeed, in his own

mind, he had very little doubt of it, for he we one of those who think that, to the poor, move is an infallible cure for every wound. At fir he strongly opposed his son's intention remaining in that part of the country; but, fir ing Mortimer determined, and Maria urg in this particular, he yielded the point; the Delmar, after a hasty dinner, again retractions read to Claybrook.

It was late when he arrived, and he of saw the rector for a few moments, who advis him to defer seeing Ellen until the morning. which he perfectly coincided, as allowing me time to prepare for a meeting which wo necessarily be a trying one to both. not been informed of Hamilton's death. recter told him, as he had feared a return the fits: she had continued entirely trang some hours, and he trusted, after another nig she would be better. Mortimer expressed great solicitude for her welfare, and his det mination to act towards her as an affection relation. As he spoke, the good clergyma eyes filled with tears, and he said, as he pres the young man's hand between both his. ". me thank you, my dear Mr. Delmar, for mys at the time that I do the same for my p child, who is incapable of acting for herself at this moment. On our former acquaintance, I little knew the kind friend I spurned from me, or the value of your affection for my poor girl. I weakly judged that every one connected with the author of my wrongs must have a heart as callous as his own; but you have proved the contrary, and I thank you for the lesson: may heaven bless you!"

Mortimer would have offered some words of comfort to his companion; but Mr. Vernon turned away suddenly, and desired the servant to bring some refreshment for Mr. Delmar.—This being declined by Mortimer, he conducted him to his room, and retired for the night.

CHAPTER VII.

Fine master the secret of her soul was such, It is reason sink highest beneath its touch.

MOURE.

OUR leve's mind was far too much ex to allow him to sleep for some hours, in he could not even persuade himself, at to lie down. Thoughts of his present pos came thick and fast; often, as he paced floor in the course of the next hour, his of tenance betrayed the cast of his reflect. The activity of the mind will often deprive body of that repose so necessary to its he and comfort, and Mortimer, though weary the constant worry of the day, was unal compose himself, until he had revolve path he had to pursue in his mind's eye: he finally did seek rest, it was of that the ep character, which betokens severe bodily well as mental fatigue; so calm, indeed, and void of dreams, that, when he awoke, it emed to him but as an hour since he had losed his eyes, though he felt convinced, by he broad daylight, and the appearance of outward objects, that it could not be early. He was sensible of a feeling of renovated tranquillity; and, springing from the bed, he soon ascertained by his watch that the clock had long passed the hour of eight.

Young Delmar was not one of those who require the obsequious attendance of the highly accomplished valet; he had never been accustomed to the elegant refinements of an exquisite toilet table, nor courted the luxuries of furred slippers, and expensive dressing-gowns, which, by the by, are most esteemed when they are the ugliest things possible. He could, as we have said, dispense with all these, consequently, it was not long before he made his way down to the breakfast-parlour, where he found Mr. Vernon had preceded him.

The latter looked much dejected, and, as Mortimer advanced, to offer his morning's salutation, he placed a letter in his hand, at the same time, saying, "I hope, Mr. Delmar.

for your own sake, you are not privy to the proposal in this paper, which was put into my hand last night—I say I hope not, for, if you are, I must tell you, however reluctantly, that I have been deceived in you, and that we meet no more."

Mortimer instantly recognised his father's hand-writing, and, though he had not seen the contents, he easily guessed the import of the communication. Glancing his eye rapidly over the pages, he saw that Lord Fitz Eustace, after having mentioned his numerous unsuccessful attempts, some years previous, to discover the abode of the unfortunate Jane Vernon's daughter, begged to enclose an order for three hundred pounds, which sum, he engaged to allow annually for her support; adding, however, as a saving clause, that be should not expect to hear any more of Ellen's connection with his family. But, should such a relationship be promulgated, he hinted that the forfeiture of the annuity would be the consequence.

The colour rushed into Mortimer's face, as he read this intimation, and he instantly comprehended the occasion of the old man's intated appearance. Mr. Vernon watched the

change of his countenance, and his own assumed a brighter expression, when he saw Delmar's altered look. "I see you are surprised," he said, as the young man finished the perusal; "I am glad you are so, for you will then enter into my feelings—your behaviour to me, Mr. Delmar, has not proved that you thought me likely to take gold in exchange for my son's life."

"My conduct, sir," replied Mortimer, "has not belied my sentiments; and, I am sure, you will credit the assertion of my sorrow at this letter, of which, until now, I knew nothing. My attachment to Ellen is the offspring of regard, and I will, as I before told you, act towards her as a brother, but you must excuse my offering any opinion on the subject here treated of—Lord Fitz Eustace, Mr. Vernon, is my father," he added, with marked emphasis.

"True, true," returned the rector, "I understand you, and I appreciate your motive—your asswer is such as I anticipated, but you cannot fail to acknowledge that insult has now been added to my misfortunes. The offer of this money, Mr. Delmar, plainly shews that Lord Fitz Eustace owns his daughter, and yet he rentures to threaten the loss of his bounty, if

his relationship be known. The Almighty knows! we have little wish to annoy his Lordship in that way, for his connection has only brought grief with it; but we are not to be bribed to silence—neither shall Ellen be supported by one who, being ashamed of his conduct, would now disclaim its consequences. As your father's representative, you must take charge of this order, since we will not accept it on such terms."

- "Permit me to ask, sir, if such be Ellea's own determination?"
- "No," returned Mr. Vernon, "she is much too ill, this morning, for me to speak on such a subject—but I am sure she would coincide with me."

"Her voice is, nevertheless, absolutely necessary, sir, before I can consent to act in this business for his Lordship. She is the person most concerned, and I must therefore request she may be consulted."

Mr. Vernon again endeavoured to induce Mortimer to change his decision, but to no purpose; he was resolute in his intention of doing justice to all, but promised that if, when able to attend to the question, Ellen should decide on rejecting the stipend, he would

convey that conclusion to the Baron. The rector, finally won over by his arguments, proceeded to acquaint him with his great alarm on Ellen's account, she having been seized with a great augmentation of fever since the evening before; in consequence of which, he had sent to ask his old friend, Mrs. Greville, to come to her; with which demand the good lady failed not to comply in the course of a few hours.

The unfortunate Ellen being so situated, Mortimer declined seeing her, from the apprebension of increasing her indisposition; and the next day a meeting was rendered useless, by her being under the influence of strong delirium. Her child was obliged to be kept entirely away from her, notwithstanding her frantic expostulations, and Mr. Vernon, being fond of the infant, frequently lavished part of his affection for its unfortunate mother upon it. much to the annoyance of poor Delmar; who, independent of the aversion young men often feel for the tender little beings, whose deeds, in after years, may be so various and so extenlive, looked upon the little girl with pain, as the offspring of a man whose crimes and character he justly hated and despised. Consequently, its presence vexed him, and generally avoided the room as much as pos ble during its temporary visits. Mr. Vern was not insensible to his feelings, and to care not to intrude too much upon his forbe ance; though, as he himself regarded the couly as that of his dear and unfortunate Ell he could do no less than cherish it like hers

Delmar's messenger returned, in as shot time as possible, from Merton Hall, bring with him, from Mr. Hamilton, together v expressions of the most heart-felt grief, quest that Mortimer would undertake e duty for him at Claybrook, until the rer of his beloved son to Merton, which he de might be effected as soon as consonan propriety. Being thus delegated to act business, we trust, our readers know of our friend Mortimer's character convinced he did his duty in every and it was on the sixth day, from the the distressing event, that he prepare his father and sister at Mr. Hamil order to be ready to attend the funer was appointed to take place on the after.

Ellen's disorder had hitherto !

atmost skill of her usual medical attendant. as well as that of the physician Mortimer had insisted upon consulting. The latter had not jet seen her, preferring to wait the turn of her disease; but, now that he found it was necessary for him to quit the house, where he had undergone a mitigated anxiety, because he knew he had it constantly in his power to visit ber at any moment,—when, we say, he found he must depart, he told Mr. Vernon he must take leave of her, even should she not recognise him. "Heaven only knows," he said, in a surrowful tone, "when, and where, we may meet again." This desire could not be opposed, and he was immediately ushered to the sick chamber, by Mrs. Greville. Mortimer stole cantiously to the bed-side, and gazed, with a mixture of sorrow and alarm, at the once beautiful Ellen Vernon, as she lay, motionless, with her eyes half closed. "Could that pale, emaciated being," he thought, "be her he had lored-her he had before known-so radiantso innocently gay-so delightful?" Too painfully be felt it was indeed the same—but alas! how changed! She looked scarcely animate, and Mortimer dropped an unconscious tear,

as he took her passive hand, and, bending down, imprinted a long kiss of grief and affection upon it. "She knows me not," he said, in a low tone, to Mrs. Greville. That lady shook her head; and again all was still as death, for a moment, until Delmar move to go away. From what cause it was difficul to determine, but something seemed to rous the invalid, for she moved slightly, and fixe her eyes upon Delmar's receding figure. He stopped, and, seeing that she noted his pre sence, returned, in the hope of being recognized. Again he pressed her hand, but it we withdrawn.

- " Hargrave?" she said, faintly.
- "Is better," returned Mortimer, who, though his heart smote him for the falsehood he gave utterance to, and the fallacious hopes he was creating, yet could not resolve to crush a hope in the sufferer's breast; for he dreaded the extinction of that solace might totally destread chance of her recovery.
- "You did not, then, kill him?" she rejoing in a tremulous voice.
- "Me! no, by Heavens!" returned astonished Mortimer, quickly.

"Yet—" resumed Ellen, pressing her hand over her eyes, "yet—I heard—I heard a pistol."

"You have been ill, my dear," interposed Mrs. Greville, gently, "and must not talk. Mr. Delmar cannot stay if you do."

"Delmar!" repeated Ellen: "Delmar—I thought it was Charles. Oh! no," she continued, after a pause, "I had forgot—Charles is dead—dead, poor fellow! and Mr. Delmar killed him."

Mortimer started, and turned pale. "I cannot stand this," he said, to the good lady, "she will drive me mad—I must go." She signed for him to do so, but he had only taken two steps, when he heard Ellen say, in piteous accents, "Hargrave, stay with me—do not go."

Mortimer, however, could not remain longer, her idea that he had been the murderer of Hamilton had completely overcome him, and he did not answer, but turned to leave the apartment. As he did so, she again called apon Hargrave, and, finding her appeal unmawered, when Mortimer closed the door, she are into tears.

"Thank God!" said he, as he listened a

moment to her sobs, "thank God! the ful display of feeling may be the resaving her life!"

Half an hour from that time, Del on his way to Merton Hall, with a l heart. Earthly hope, which seemed entirely forsaken the rector's breast, Mortimer's companion; for, althoug life was considered in the most immir ger, he argued more favourably of h since she had found vent for her grief

Mr. Vernon had exacted a promi return to the cottage, as soon as hi duties to his family would allow of so, for the old man had derived both and comfort from the society of tl He felt that each was interest same object, that each had received blow; and companionship in sorrow e a stronger bond than the communio piness. Partners in the same troi bound closer together by the indiff surrounding objects, or the want of s those alone who are acquainted wit tune can appreciate it in others, wh willing to partake of happiness. lures everywhere, and at all time quently, it is calculated to produce those feelings of interest which are invariably generated by sorrow.

Mortimer was especially formed to attract the affection of those with whom he was on habits of constant intercourse; his high and generous mind was united to a disposition of benevolence and kindness, which ever won him the esteem of those connected with him; and, though much of the heat and impetuosity peculiar to the sons of Erin was natural to him, it was so tempered by his mother's occidental softness, and his own good sense, that it scarcely appeared a fault in his character.

Notwithstanding the painful discovery, and consequent abrupt separation between him and the rector formerly, he had made so lively an impression on the good clergyman's heart, during their short acquaintance, that he had never ceased to remember him with a mixed sensation of pleasure and pain; and now, although his visit had been followed, or rather attended, by the most dreadful consequences, Mr. Vernon could not fail to admire, nay, almost to love, him. His tender solicitude for him and Ellen had been so great, his sympathy



rarely quitted the sick chamber; nothing to distract his painful the would indulge in sorrowful forel the hour together.

CHAPTER VIII.

'Tis I that am alone to blame, I, that am guilty of love's treason; Since your sweet breast is still the same, Caprice must be my only reason.

BYRON.

NTIME our hero proceeded to Merton, we he had the satisfaction of finding Mrs. silton more tranquil than he could have exted. Of the following week we shall, ever, not speak farther than by saying Maria was a young widow; rendered by a most appalling circumstance, and she felt her situation keenly, though she strength of mind to support the trial. At end of that time, Lord Fitz Eustace determed to return with her to Ireland, as she essed a decided aversion to the continent he present juncture.

Martimer auting heart, from Mr. Venes. that Ellen was a traile better, since his door ture, was enall al, with less mental uneasing to accompany his father and sister to Lorder whence, in a short time, he saw them set4 by sea, for Ireland. He had resisted eve persuasion to 29 with them, but promised, follow within a short period. It will I quickly divined that his intention was to retail to the North, and such was really the cas for, though intelligence from that quarter wi more favourable, he could perceive that & Vernon was a prey to the greatest despot dency, and he suspected more, perhaps, the the truth, but certainly, more than he know He accordingly despatched all his sister urgent business as speedily as possible, a started by coach again for F-. : 1

While in the Metropolis, his thoughts a unfrequently turned to Sir George Heron, as Beatrice; he longed to see them, but he con not conquer his repugnance even to write, his friend, under the then existing circumstances. He foresaw that any visit, or letter on his part, must entail explanations, or least, a most painful recurrence to past even from which, in the yet early stage of his

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ted and wounded mind, he shrunk, with al timidity. Harrassed by his multifaemployments, he, perhaps, permitted if to be unduly depressed by his sister's vement, and to feel deeply the humiliatotoriety his family would gain in the ever world.

is, although he passed within a very distance of the Hall, he avoided pausing for the reason we have mentioned, and e time reached the rectory. How often hose plans, which we have arranged ding to our own ideas of comfort, frusmost unexpectedly, and yet, not unfrely most fortunately, as it afterwards rs, by events we have little calculated

friend Mortimer had purposely kept from the Herons, and yet, it so hap-, the very first person he saw in the nage garden, was his friend, Sir ;e!

elmar, my dear fellow," he said, without ng, and perhaps without observing, mer's surprise, "how glad I am to see tgain amongst us; not for myself only, r the sake of our good friends here, who

ers sur ... our des Am dies, desse.

m court and how was I am maxious should not an will not vonder to see me had become a market of the maxious for the reasons a measure total. When did you last formations.

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the stell is I would introducted said like their with a sum a sum of the I mank my father with the affective many value have been supposed that the second the second the conditional, quickly manufacture to second the accordance to second the second the second to the second the second to the second the second to the second

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He was some step and energed the collection of the second state of the second and led by he second state object the

bet the eye of Mortimer, was Beatrice Heron. She was speaking to Mrs. Greville, and her bead, half turned aside, prevented his observing the expression of her countenance at the moment of his entrance. He started, for he did not expect to be ushered into her presence, and a paler shade for an instant overspread his cheek, but he quickly recovered himself, and advanced towards her with unhesitating kindness. His reception was courteous and membarrassed, and a moment after she turned to Mr. Vernon, saying, as she rose, "I am how going again to Ellen, sir, but will not stay long, though she is certainly better to-day."

"I am glad to hear you say so, my dear liss Heron, for I myself fancied her stronger." She quitted the room, and Mr. Vernon, turning to Mortimer, continued, "Miss Heron has been so kind as to come here several times to hit an hour with my poor girl, who is much pleased with her kind attention." He then proceeded to answer Mortimer's anxious enquiries, by informing him that he dated the mendment in the invalid from the period of his last interview with her. "Seeing you, my dear Mr. Delmar," he said, "seemed to recal

her scattered senses; for, although she has wept almost continually since, all disease has gradually disappeared, and we hope, in a few days, to see her down stairs. But you must judge for yourself."

- "Me!" said Mortimer, "she will not see me!"
- "Do you doubt it, Mr. Delmar? It was only a few hours ago that she desired me to let her know the moment you arrived, as she had much to communicate to you."
- "Indeed! she must have been undeceived with regard to her opinion of me then—has she spoken at all, sir, of what has occurred?"
- "Never," replied the rector, "and we feared to introduce the subject."
- "That is well—the wound will sooner heal if unmolested."

Beatrice soon returned, and, on Mortiner's enquiring her opinion of Ellen, she told him that the invalid had commissioned her to request Mr. Delmar would come to her directly. "However," she continued, "I told her you were at present engaged, for I thinkshe is too tired to see you now."

Mortimer thought her voice seemed more soft, when speaking of Ellen, her manner

more kind, and he felt vexed when, after a quarter of an hour's conversation, she left the cottage with her brother, who exacted a promise from his friend that he would visit the castle in a day or two.

That evening Mr. Vernon succeeded in persuading Ellen to forego the projected meeting with Mortimer, since she was fatigued. and it would necessarily be an agitating one for her; but they found that, in consequence of her unsatisfied anxiety, she slept little, and was not so well in the morning. However, as soon as she was up she sent for him, and Mortimer instantly obeyed the summons, though, it must be confessed, not without a fincture of fear that the interview would be a painful one. On entering the room, he was immediately struck by her emaciated appear-Que-she was reposing on a couch, beside Which stood the bercelette of her little girl. wherein the latter was lying asleep. Thin. pale, and weak, the first glance told her visiter how deep, how sure, grief had made her its prey; but he had sufficient command over his countenance to conceal his sudden alarm, and he took her extended hand with the most affectionate kindness. For some moments she

was greatly agitated, and, motioning hithe chair beside her, continued to preshand in hers, and sob painfully, notwiths ing his tender remonstrances. At lengt partially recovered her composure, thou voice yet trembled, as she said, "Alas severely does the sad cause of this me my kind friend, recal the abruptness first separation. Our acquaintance is deto be marked by sorrow, soothed only by disinterested kindness. Most deeply do and most warmly acknowledge, your bro conduct."

Again her tears threatened to overcon calmness, and Mortimer replied, "My p duty, dear Ellen, has obliged me, in more one instance, to wound the heart of whom I would have screened from ever and I have acutely felt the unavoidable I have inflicted. It therefore gives n greatest satisfaction to know that my a have not been misconstrued. Any and exertion, in my power, for your advant at your command."

[&]quot;You are little aware, Mr. Delman much-"

[&]quot;Mr. Delmar, Ellen," he said, reproac

"I have not called you by so cold a name.

Am I not your brother?"

"I have no name now," rejoined she, sornwfully. "but, that I received at the fontthere you could not mistake-but look not so sad, my brother Mortimer, I will not offend again, for the sweet privilege of owning my relationship will not be lightly valued. But I was going to say that you are little aware how much I am about to impose upon you. There are many things, Mortimer, which have happened lately, I would have explainedmany questions I believe you alone can solve, and I have waited your return, that I might have the mystery unravelled. I feel I am making a great demand upon your kindness, in asking for a repetition of what has probed us all so deeply, but-" and here again her courage failed, and she wept bitterly.

"Why distress yourself thus, my poor Ellen," said Mortimer, "why harp on this subject, at least until you are stronger; believe me, in many cases, ignorance is bliss. A detail of the past is only calculated to arouse our grief, without any use. Let me entreat you to retract your request."

"I cannot, Mortimer, indeed; I would have

singular in bear Mr. Vernon, but I wished to some Lim one party of possible, for I am sum to have the term well, since you went ever The product in pity to him do as I am I look to fire as my comfort."

And spire I will emissioner to prove, Ellen, the in the manner you propose, but it will be made.

My only wish. Mortimer, is to hear all-land with she continued, as her manner assumed the withdress, and her eye the brilliancy, of fellowing. I know indeed, too well, that poor highways is dead, though you told me the contrary.—I know." and she pointed to the besselette, "that little innocent, like her wretthed mother, is an outcast—I know."

"Nay. Ellen." said Delmar, rising, not a little alarmed by her gestures, "I must leave you if you talk thus, neither dare I come again unless you are more tranquil; this, however, I will promise you, I will tell you all you desire to know in a few days, when you are better. Do not weep—come, shew me your baby."

"Why should you ask to see it, Mortimer! It can prove but an eye-sore to one of noble birth like you. Alas! poor infant!" she pursued, as she took it in her arms, and covered

it with kisses, "would that it had pleased thy Maker to remove thee at thy birth from a world of sin and misery! See, Mortimer, she smiles, she already knows you are good, and kind to me."

Delmar made no answer, for her words cut him to the heart; but he did not repulse the child, whom its mother placed upon his knee, and, for the first time in his life, he caressed the infant.

"You will have her taken care of, Mortimer, when I am gone," said Ellen, inquiringly, as she stroked its tender cheek, "you will discharge that duty yourself?"

"I hope, dear Ellen," returned her compation, after an instantaneous pause of surprise this sudden request, "you will be more ca-Pable of resuming your duties every day now."

"So they tell me, Mortimer," she replied with a sigh, which told him no such hope existed in her breast. He was not willing to fathom the meaning of this speech, and therefore hailed the entrance of Mrs. Greville, with Pleasure, and availed himself of it to terminate his visit. To all Mr. Vernon's interrogations, he replied in such a manner as not to reveal the forcible impression the interview had made

account; he was unwilling to communicate h fears and forebodings, and wisely resolve to be silent, at least, until he had more opportunity of seeing Ellen.

Men invariably become alarmed in cases of illness, both for themselves and others, much sooner than the softer sex, whose habits naturally lead them more frequently into the atmosphere of a sick room; and Mortimon, unaccustomed to contemplate severe indisposition, was influenced by Ellen's grief and despondency. The fact was, that he had been prepared, or rather had flattered himself, with the hope of finding the invalid better than be really did. Her appearance at first shocked him, and, although she looked better after a little while, he could not divest himself of the idea of her early death, and was consequently sensible of a depression on his spirits.

Sir George Heron rode over in the afternoon to the cottage, and spent an hour with his friend. He was the bearer of an invitation, backed most cordially by his mother, that Mortimer would come up to the castle on the following day; which, at first, he declined, wishing to devote his time to Ellen and Mr.



ernon. The latter, however, expressed his ish for him not to consider them so entirely, and he agreed to accept a dinner and a bed, ecordingly, at the castle.

"I will send a horse for you Delmar, about mid-day," said the baronet, as he shook his mand at parting.

"By no means, my dear George, I thank you," returned he, "I should much prefer trusting to my own limbs for making my way to you. I know the road by the fields well." A slight sigh escaped him, and George, observing it, pressed him no farther on the subject, but took his leave, saying, he should expect him early.

Now it may seem strange that the Honourable Mortimer Delmar, who certainly was, and had long ago been, affected by a strong partiality, as the reader will doubtless remember, for his friend's sister, and had determined that, as soon as possible, he would repair his error, and renew his suit; it may seem strange we say, that he should have appeared backward in availing himself of the earliest opportunity of approaching her. But true love is a most modest passion, and, feeling neither his spirits nor his self-confidence at their best.

Delmar had shrunk from a return to the haunt of his first and purest affection, when the occasion he had looked for presented itself. Persuasion, however, had overcome the sensations, and he then thought with satisfaction of his re-admission to the baronet's family circle. He passed great part of the evening with the invalid, who signified her intention of leaving her room on the following day.

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"You have already done me so much good, dear Mortimer," said she, laying her little thin hand upon his, "that I think, if I am always with you, I shall soon be able to bear the painful disclosure."

Upon this, he recommended her to defer this purpose another day or two, particularly as he had engaged himself to Sir George on the morrow, not supposing she would so soon be able to give him the pleasure of seeing her in the parlour. To this she assented, for it appeared as if her affection for Mortimer was compounded of so much deference and esteem, as well as tender love, that a very trifle was sufficient to bias her, and he left her certainly more tranquil than on his arrival.

Towards one o'clock, after having desired

that a boy might be sent with his bag in the course of an hour, he sauntered across the fields, which separated the village from the castle, thinking deeply of numberless things, which we have neither the time nor the inclination to analize. As he reached that spot, where he and his friend had been overtaken by the storm, an unaccountable impulse made him stop; and, turning round for a few minutes, he remained stationary, until the voice of Sir George, in tones of raillery, was heard close to him. He turned quickly, and, taking the baronet's arm, they walked onwards.

George could not forbear noticing his companion's gloom, though he would not openly
remark it; but, after having detailed the state
of the inmates of the rectory, Mortimer himself entered upon the momentous subject,
saying, "You, perhaps, may have felt, Heron,
that I have betrayed a want of friendship—of
confidence towards you, in all that relates to
Ellen; for, now that you know how we stand
connected, you doubtless can account for my
abrupt departure from England; but I assure
you such was not the case, since I have never
doubted the strength of your attachment. You
must, however, acknowledge that I could not

commit the discovery I had made, even to your keeping, without bringing forward my father's name to your notice, in a manner at once unpleasant and painful; therefore, I restrained my wish for your advice and sympathy. I think Mr. Vernon has told you all that has occurred, and thus spared me the mortification of an explanation?"

"He has. Delmar. You have heard that my father was a very old and dear friend of his; consequently, I believe he has permitted a portion of that esteem he felt for him, to devolve upon his son. He, therefore, as soon as I paid him a visit after arriving here, informed me of the distressing circumstances which had again called you to this part of the country: and I can assure you, my dear fellow, if it were possible to have raised my admiration of your worth in a higher degree, his unequivocal testimony of your noble generosity would have effected it. I can well understand and appreciate your reserve on this head, and I am sure you will credit my sincere sorrow for the distress you must have suffered throughout the affair."

"I do, indeed, George; and I must say I am glad you are no longer to be kept in the dark on the subject, for I am convinced that mental anxiety is increased two-fold, by being confined within the narrow compass of a man's breast. Sympathy from a friend is like a composing draught; it soothes and comforts the frame, though it may not eradicate the disease."

"Still a moraliser, Mortimer," said his companion, smiling. "Come, let us step on towards the Castle, for our composing draught seems to have acted so potently that we have been almost standing still the last quarter of hour."

They now proceeded without hesitation, Conversing in a more lively vein, and soon Found themselves in Heron Park, where every Object, almost every tree, seemed familiar to the returned Mortimer; who became more silent as he and his companion neared the mansion.

"My sister is not far off, I presume," said sir George, as Beatrice's favourite greyhound came bounding towards them. "Bedos rarely quits her side."

The little animal, after having leaped fawningly upon its master, ran quickly up to Delmar; and, with inquisitive eagerness, stood

upon his hind legs to smell his hands, and there looked in his face with earnest enquiry "Poor Bedos!" said our hero, attracted by his actions, and bending, as he spoke, to pat the dog's head, "I really think you have not forgotten me."

"No, that I am sure he has not," rejoined the Baronet, as Bedos testified, by every dumb expression, his delight at hearing his old friend's voice. The dog still occupied their attention, when they reached the lawn, where they were met by lady Heron and her daughter. Mortimer found a kind welcome from each, and, in a short time, was as much at home so if he had been there but yesterday.

Beatrice, ever gentle and kind, seemed even more so to him now that his feelings yet smarted from recent sorrow, and the augmented pensiveness which he detected in her manner, since they parted, contributed, from its congeniality, to tighten the silken cord which already bound him to her. With a mind entirely pre-disposed to be pleased with his fair companion, and feeling he had before mistaken and resisted the promptings of his better genius, it will not be a matter of surprise to any, that Mortimer found the hours fy

e, speaking to her mother, or Icr behaviour to him was casy ted; and he already indulged a he might yet be his. Among the s he had seen, Beatrice alone had asting impression which neither stance could efface; and, after elled for years throughout almost v of southern Europe, and mixed ires of the world with the ardent soft, the lovely Greek, or the gay 'rench, he returned with pleasure anionship, of the unsophisticated rement. For such Beatrice might signated, never having, for more veeks at a time, quitted the strict r mother had observed since the Sir Thomas Heron. In the course ng, Mortimer enquired after lady

Sir George, however, had left the room, wd lady Heron said gravely, "I believe, Mr. Delmar, you will have the opportunity of seeing lady Dinely here in a few days; for George, contrary to my wish, has invited her to spend a week with us. Your long and intimate acquaintance with my son will enable you to comprehend the motive which actuates him in this proceeding."

"It is not difficult, indeed, my dear madam," returned Mortimer. "But I flatter myself that you need not have any dread of her visit; for, I think, nay, can almost say, I am sure, he has entirely overcome the attachment I thought he once entertained for his cousin."

"Such is, also, my opinion," returned her ladyship; "but lady Dinely must command a dangerous pity from him, since, I fear, she has decided unfortunately with regard to her marriage. You may have heard from George how reluctantly her friends consented to her union with sir Harry, and, unhappily, they have not been deceived, with respect to the sacrifice her made, in marrying such a man as he has since proved himself." The tears started into the good lady's eyes as she said this, and Mortimer, unwilling to give pain, quickly turned the conversation into another channel.

CHAPTER IX.

And shall presumptuous mortals heaven arraign, And, madly, godlike providence accuse? Ah! no, far fly from me attempts so vain, I'll ne'er submission to my God refuse.

BYRON.

The next day being wet, Delmar was prevented, as he had intended, from returning early to the cottage; and, after watching the weather an hour, in the vain hope that the atmosphere would clear, lady Heron proposed that they should all go over to Claybrook in the carriage in the afternoon: "You will then be able to see your young friend, my dear,"—she said to Beatrice.

To this all readily consented, and, to employ the time until one o'clock, Sir George conducted his friend to the billiard room, which had been fitted up within the last few months, by orders, as a means of furnishing pleasing amusement, when others, out of doors, were precluded. Having always been accustomed to participate in the pleasures of this pastime, in Hertfordshire, where it had for years constituted her father's chief resource, Beatrice played well, and Mortimer, himself an adept, was delighted to find so skilful an antagonist.

Many an intoxicating, many a gratifying hour, was spent by our friend Delmar from this period, in perambulations round that take, where, while seemingly intent upon the game, his pleased fancy warmed over the future, and he contemplated the time when he should think himself justified by circumstances, is demanding a return of that affection which he already began to feel was re-awakened for his fair companion. With the reader's permitsion, we will now creep into the barouche, with our hero, and take advantage of that converance to transport ourselves to the parlow the good clergyman. To the surprise of all the party they found Ellen there, ready to receive them; she met Mortimer with every symptom of affection, and her countenance was betrayed into the first faint attempt at a

ile which he had seen, so faint indeed was hat, no sooner had he noted its creation, in, like the existence of the infant, whose h, life, and death, are comprehended in one if instant, it came and vanished! nipped in bud! and again the features of the invalid imed their former melancholy.

You see, dear Mortimer," she said, after ing acknowledged the salutation of the ons, "you see I have not implicitly obeyed r injunctions, for I felt so much better this ning, that I have left my room to welcome surprise vou. I mean soon to be well in-do I not already look better?" she coned. appealing to Beatrice, who answered sively, though in a manner calculated to quilise and satisfy her. The excitement, ever, of seeing so many, added to the great rtion of stifling her grief, and assuming a e composure, soon exhausted the delicate . and produced faintness, which induced inmates of the Castle to hasten their arture, not, however, without having ented Delmar to consider the castle as his e, whenever he felt disposed to make it so, affording Mr. Vernon every comfort and solation, in the power of those noble,

generous minds to bestow, which have known hours of trial.

Though fatigued, from over exertion. Ellen would not return to her room, professing to derive much more advantage from Mortime's society than the companionship of a hateful solitude, corroded by bitter reflection. Delmar easily saw through the motive of this resolution to rouse herself; he saw she was endeavouring to seem stronger daily, in order that she might the sooner claim his promised explanation, and he feared she would defeat her own pur pose. Nevertheless, as he saw her surpass his expectations, day after day, and become more active, his apprehensions wore off, and, at the expiration of a fortnight, he was surprised w observe how vast a change, for the better, had been wrought apparently in her strength, since She was now able to move across his return. the room unassisted, though he still supported her up and down stairs; her eye no longer testified the influence of languor and dejection. but looked almost as bright as was its wost It is true, her sighs were at times appalling, she spoke seldom, though oftener than before and her emaciation still continued, notwithstanding the improvement in her appetite. In

dering these changes for the better, imer felt contented with her progress, and nking over the other symptoms of indision, which yet required amendment, he ited himself by recollecting all could not ne at once: "Rome was not built in a day," nother week might work wonders.

t our hero was less prone now to seek out -In the short time which succeeded his al in the North, he had learned once more ok at the brighter side of life's opening re. His eye was less jaundiced to the future had gathered fresh hope from his renewed aintance with Beatrice, of being happy with and his time had been pleasingly divided een the castle and the parsonage, though atter, engrossed by far the greatest portion Ellen, indeed, never seemed easy unless as with her, and the conviction of affordher so much gratification, added to the t attraction of Beatrice's society, furnished sinducement to quit a spot where he felt qually received and conferred benefits. beard of his father's and sister's safe landin Ireland,—he heard both were better, and iously desired him to join them. d be more satisfactory! What else could

he anticipate? He promised both them, himself, that in an another month he would & with them. Then, he thought, he should be able to carry consolation to the Baronial mansion of Fitz Eustace. Ellen, he flattered himself, would be nearly well-his business in London, which might occupy a fortnight, would be completed, and, perhaps-Beatrice might know, and have accepted, the offer of his affection. The radiant smile which hovered round her mouth. and the delicate blush upon her cheek, at his approach, whispered encouragement to his marked attentions; and had he not still felt the humiliation of the late events, he would have ascertained the state of her mind without farther delay. In the time he had determined yet to remain at the cottage, he felt opportunity would not be wanting for the avowal, and he resolved to postpone it until after Lady Dinely's visit. "We shall know each other still better then," thought he, "and now I am so happy that I almost dread change in any way."

Mortimer arranged these ideas in his mind, as he returned to the parsonage, on the afternoon fixed for the arrival of Sir Harry and Lady Dinely, whom he wisely avoided meeting.

on the first day of their domiciliation at the castle. He had not slept at Mr. Vernon's the two previous nights, although he had not failed in his accustomed daily visits; consequently, when he entered the parlour, and announced his intention of staying with Ellen the whole evening, she expressed much pleasure at the prospect, particularly as Mr. Vernon had been obliged to go to F——, and would not return until the following morning. "You will now fulfil your promise, Mortimer," she said, "for we shall never find another opportunity half to propitious, and, you must allow that I have waited patiently, and deserve to be indulged."

A cold shiver ran through Mortimer, as he beard this demand, it was a task he would gladly have shunned, equally for her sake and his own; but he knew not how to avoid it. She had fixed upon him as the fittest person to make the disclosure—in his heart he had acknowledged the wisdom of the selection, and he had promised to execute the duty. He had put off the evil moment, and had seen her anxiously struggling to prepare herself for the hour of trial; and, now—when that time had arrived, and he saw she had nerved herself for the occasion, he was reluctantly obliged to comply.

VOL II.

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"This evening, dear Ellen!" he exclaimed after a moment's hesitation: "if you are indeed, resolute in your determination, I will do so; but I hope you will still spare yourself..."

She placed her hand gently, but firmly, upon his arm, and, looking steadily in his face, sai : I, with a solemnity which startled him; "Mortimer, I would not have required this from you, were it possible for me to be injured by it. For your sake, I would not contribute to my illness, but—fear not, my more than brother the deed is already done—the blow is struck—ere many weeks the blighted hopes, the ruined name, the irreparable injuries of the namele sellen, will descend with her body to the ground whence it was taken."

"Dear Ellen, why speak in this frights manner? Your health improves every day and, I trust, you will yet continue to be blessing to yourself and others. Think your child."

"I do, Mortimer, but without anxiety. If she live, He who clothes the lilies of the fie Id will take care of her; if not, I cannot wish her better provided for. Do not look alarmed, dearest Mortimer; I thought you, at least, were not deceived by false hopes of recovery."

"Until this moment I never doubted it, Filen. You are out of spirits this evening. Come, let us change the subject: where is Mr. Vernon gone?"

"Ah! Mortimer, it makes me unhappy to think of him. What will become of him when lam gone? Nay, do not interrupt me-I would confide in you. To your ear alone I would commit my decided opinion of the approach of death.—To outward appearance I may be better, but it is the heart which feels the wound: mine is broken:—I feel that, by slow degrees. I shall sink, and ere long the lamp of my existence will be extinguished. Ir. Brownlow knows my situation, and I have cantioned him against making it known to any one, having resolved, at present, only to tell my conviction, which I have done now, cause I wish you to understand how safely on may commence your explanation this vening. You will not betray my confidence, ear Mortimer?"

"No, dear Ellen," replied he, as something bery much like a tear swam in his eye, produced by the new light in which he now looked upon her case, and the sudden annihilation of his fondest hope of her recovery. "No; but

I cannot believe what you announce; it is so unlooked for—so sudden. I must see Brownlow."

"You shall do so to-morrow," returnes Ellen; "but do not grieve for me, Mortimer I am young to die, it is true; but I have beetoo much the object of fortune's frowns t value life on my own account. Even in this seclusion, I have known sin and grief enoug to make me wish to pass from this world to am other, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. Death has n terrors for me, but, on the contrary, I shall receive it as a boon, and my only pain will b for the two or three dear friends I leave behind Among them, my noble brother ranks high unlike others, you have not disdained to tres me with affection: you have made me feel tha affection and generosity are not unknown i that rank in society from which I have cruell been excluded by birth; and I own I hav considered you as my sole parent. Your lov will comfort my last hours, and God will bles vou for it!"

Tears rolled rapidly down her cheeks as sh said the last words, and she gently pressed hi hand

Mortimer, who had not listened to the calm intimation of her own dissolution without considerable emotion, now rose and kissed her tenderly, as she reclined in her easy chair;then quitted the room in that haste which the concealment of his agitation demanded. bed-room was over the parlour, and, for quarter of an hour, Ellen heard him traverse the chamber with disordered steps. before tea time, he rejoined her, and, during that social meal, they conversed without the slightest allusion to the previous conversation. Mortimer was a shade more thoughtful, while his companion, on the contrary, strove to divest her mind of its ordinary gloom, for his sake. Being again seated by the cheerful fire, a pause ^{an}cceeded. Ellen almost feared to press for the disclosure of her untold misfortunes;—while Mortimer was equally reluctant to commence a narration of such harrowing importance solicited.

Both looked up at the same moment; their Eyes met, and each comprehended the thoughts of the other.

"Mortimer," said Ellen quietly, "I am prepared; I cannot close my eyes in peace, until I know and can forgive the unhappy Charles' crrors. Tell me all now. Sec, I am quality

This was, indeed, true, for she looked pale and immovable as marble, and, as Moreimer pressed her hand, its icy coldness "thrilled to the bone."

"Ellen," he said, "I will obey you, painform as may be the office, I should be jealous of another holding it, for your dependance gratifies me. You will not require me to enter into your early history, which I heard from Mr. Vernon?"

She shook her head, and he proceeded to give her the account of Hamilton's marriage, and his subsequent conduct. When he reached that point which treated of his northern journey, and the discovery of Hamilton's villany, his ill-fated auditress covered her face with her thin hands, and groaned aloud. He paused, in silent pity, until, finding he had ceased, she looked up, and said, in tones of agony, "My child, my innocent child! Oh!—Hargrave, how could you doom her also to shame! That is the bitterest drop in my cup of life! Yet, go on, Mortimer;"—she a ided more quietly, "I must bear it."

Delmar passed rapidly over the rash act

of the detected Hamilton, for she now wept bitterly; and he went on to say how heartily he thought the misguided man had repented his crimes, and had sued for pardon.

"Did you stay with him to the last, Mortimer?" she enquired with a voice almost inaudible, from her convulsive sobs.

"I did, Ellen; and I believe the greatest remorse he felt was for the wreck he had made of your happiness. The whole of the sum he could call his own he has willed to you as a reparation, I suppose." His lip curled high as he spoke, and Ellen rejoined, with more asperity than he had witnessed in her before; "Did he think I would receive a price for my ruin? Did he consider me so mean, Mortimer? Your looks tell me you do not believe it."

- "No, Ellen, I could not; I dared not."
- "You are right. Never, never would I touch it! Oh God!" she added, clasping her hands wildly, "forgive his injustice! forgive him all, and teach me to do the same!" Her head sank on her bosom, and a deep silence ensued, which was at length broken by Ellen, who, addressing her companion, whose eyes were fixed apon the fire, said, "Fortunately there are no wants in the grave, therefore I shall not need his bounty—would he had not offered it—I

settlement for life."

should have thought less severely of him.

"I hope it was done rather with a wish to rerve, than to insult, you, Ellen—I wish yout to look upon the offer of future provision less harshly; not only in charity to the deceased but for the sake of one who must ever command my duty and respect—I mean my father, who has written to Mr. Vernon, offering you a

For a few moments she did not answer, but then she replied, steadily, "Mortimer, money cannot heal my wounds—the obscure Ellen will not accept anything but the pitiful gift of a wretched, bitter life, from the hands of Fitz Eustace—name it not again, or I must think you too despise me."

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"Heaven forbid! I felt confident of your answer before I spoke, and did so only in obedience to my duty. From the first moment the proposal was made, Mr. Vernon peremptorily refused it for you; but, although I knew, as well as he, what would be your determination, I thought you ought to be allowed the opportunity of declaring it yourself."

"I thank you, most deeply, for all your kindness, dear Mortimer," she answered, as he said the last words, "I can never express half the gratitude I feel—But I am still the daughter of

Fitz Eustace, and I will not depend upon a Parent who wronged my mother, and neglected me, until I am, unwillingly, made the instrument, in the hands of heaven, to recal his former cruelty most bitterly to his mind. Now he doubtless would heap benefits upon me, to silence his own conscience, and my just complaints-but he need not be under any apprehension, Mortimer, the grave reveals no secrets, and affection for you shall close my lips-You shall never have to blush on my account, and the tomb shall be the depository of my sorrows! We have been strangely thrown together, Mortimer, most strangely—doubtless for some wise end. and He who guides our destinies vill recompense your virtues—Yes, your reward is in heaven, whither I am journeying auickly!"

Seeing that this long and painful conversaon had greatly overpowered the invalid,
Mortimer proposed that she should seek repose,
which she assented, and they parted, with a
leep sympathy for the recent sufferings of the
other. Mortimer did not fail to mark the
bright hectic which, for the first time that
wight, flushed her countenance, but which
visited her cheek often afterwards, when anything agitated her.

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CHAPTER X.

Sweet Maiden, dear my life must be, Since it is worthy care from thee; Yet life I hold but idle breath, When love, or honour's weigh'd with death.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

AGAIN, next day, Mortimer was to dine at Sir George's, but, as it was not his intention to the there until late in the day, he spent all the forenoon in amusing, or rather endeavouring to amuse, Ellen, who seemed humbled, crushed, and dejected, even more than she had been the night before, on the first shock of the announcement. Not that she sought relief in violent grief—no!—that would not have cut the warmhearted Delmar half so deep; but she looked so supremely wretched, so calm, patient, and despairing, that it seemed to wring his very soul to look at her. Twenty times, in the course of

the information she wished, but neither nationed the subject. Mr. Vernon returned, de Ellen resisted all Mortimer's wishes to an excuse to the castle.

Pray, pray, go Mortimer," she said, "if Ou are so solicitous about me, you will alarm Ir. Vernon, which I would, of all things preent. I will go early to bed, and try to sleep, Or I scarcely closed my eyes last night, and then you will find me better on your return."

Thus pressed, he hesitated no longer, but soon set off for his friend's house. At the distance of a mile from the village, he encountered Mr. Brownlow, and each immediately drew rein, for the purpose of salutation. The worthy mediciner enquired after his patient, whom he is then, he said, going to visit. Mortimer informed him of her increased indisposition, her conviction of her own danger, and his desire to be told the plain truth.

"My dear sir," answered Mr. Brownlow, indly, "life is in the hands of the Almighty, and we must not give up all hope of our poor iend's recovery, though, I know, she herself ntertains no idea of such an event—As you sk, however, for my candid opinion, and you

are one who is deeply interested in my patie of I will own that I consider her state a more precarious one—She has never recovered that blow, and her illness has left the moderadful traces of its ravages behind it."

"I fear this cough, Brownlow," rejoined.

Mortimer, carnestly.

"So do I, Mr. Delmar, it is an unpleasant symptom. Does it increase much?"

"To-day it has been more troublesome; indeed I think she is altogether very ill, so much so that I do not like her to be alone—I have thought that it might be adviseable to remove her to a warmer climate?"

"Change of scene might benefit her, Mr. Delmar,—but even that is doubtful, and the obstacles against a removal are so numerous that I fear such a plan is not likely to be effected."

"But it shall be effected, Brownlow, if it be within the range of possibility, and you deem it necessary. Do you think there is any reason to believe that her feelings of danger are well founded, or are they only the offspring of low spirits and debility?"

"I think, as I before said, that her state is most precarious, but I also hope that the

*Pring may restore her; at present it would be dangerous to remove her, we must look to the spring, sir, to do her good—we must not despond—she is young, and time and medicine may do much."

"I hope to heaven they will!" said Mortimer, thoughtfully: "but I own, I am very uneasy—however, do not let me detain you. I see you are unwilling to destroy all hopes, though your conscience forbids you to credit fulse ones."

Upon this they separated, the doctor to purehis Esculapian avocations, and Mortimer to use, as he rode slowly on, upon the thousand hasing, as well as pleasing, subjects, upon which his mind was ever bent.—He was ill tisfied with his conversation with the doctor, The perceived that, with the characteristic caution of his class, Mr. Brownlow had avoided mmitting himself, and he would not speak onfidently of either result of Ellen's illness. Confound his dissimulation!" thought Delmar. "how I hate all his tribe. It must, however, be confessed they are useful nuisances some-Cimes; and, if I do not feel satisfied, I will persuade Ellen to see a Physician before I leave her." Having thus determined, he allowed his ideas to be engrossed by Beatrice, and his lightful anticipations in that quarter, until gates of Heron Park rose to his view. He was then suddenly aroused by the clatter approaching horsemen, and, in a minute, the whole party drew up beside him. He looked up in surprise, and instantly recognised his friend the Baronet, and the ci-devant Mary Beaumont, with a handsome stranger, apparently some few years under thirty, whom he conjectured was no other than her husband.

"Mortimer," said Sir George, "I believe you are already acquainted with my cousin! Lady Dinely, you have not forgotten Mr. Delmar."

"It would be difficult to do so after once knowing him," replied Lady Dinely, smiling, as they mutually bowed, "allow me to introduce my husband to you," she continued,—"Mr. Delmar, Sir Harry Dinely; Sir Harry, Mr. Delmar."

"Though I have never had the pleasure of seeing you before, Mr. Delmar," said Sir Harry, "I have often heard my friend, Mrs. Hamilton, mention her brother in such terms as to make me anxious to cultivate his acquaintance, and I hope this will not be our only opportunity of meeting."

These preliminaries of an introduction being concluded, Mortimer enquired after Lady Heron and Beatrice, who Sir George informed him had accompanied the equestrian party in the carriage during the ride, until they reached the cottage, where they had expected to arrive before Mortimer's departure. Finding however, he had set off, his mother and sister had remained a short time with Ellen, while he with his visiters had hastened after Delmar. The latter expressed his pleasure and obligation for Lady Heron's kindness, and they conversed gaily until they reached the mansion.

"I think I shall ride back and meet Lady Heron, George," said Mortimer, suddenly turning his horse in the direction they had just come. "I suppose she will be again on the road by this time."

"Oh! it is scarcely worth while, Mortimer, ey will be here soon, and I want you to see I harry Dinely's famous horse, for I have en telling him how knowing you are in orse-flesh."

"Do you presume to think, George," said his ousin, archly, "that Mr. Delmar, who I know so gallant, will sacrifice the pleasure of cting the gay cavalier, for the sake of seeing

that wretched animal Sir Harry prizes highly, and in which I am sure I could never detect the smallest pretension to beauty?"

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"That is because you do not understand it Mary," replied her husband, in no way pleased at her contempt of his favourite. I wish you would confine your opinions to those things which belong to yourself," he added, as Mortimer galloped off, after saying, with a bow to Lady Dinely, how much he felt flattered by ber opinion of him. She made her husband no reply, but entered the house with an air of easy nonchalance, while her spouse accompanied George to the former's favourite haunt, the stables.

Mortimer, meanwhile, retrod the road to the village, and about a mile and a half from the park joined the ladies. As he rode beside the carriage, which was an open one, they talked of their visit, and Delmar derived no small pleasure from the interest they expressed for Ellen. The way from Claybrook was a cross road, and, though kept in tolerable repair. was so narrow that, in passing any other vehicle, the young horseman was obliged to relinquish his station, and fall to the rear, but a moment's interval found him again at his post.

the distance had now been accomplished, when the attention of all was called to the sound of a carriage advancing towards them at a most furious rate.

"What, in the name of wonder, can that be Mr. Delmar!" said Lady Heron, anxiously, "something surely must have happened—"

- "I fancy so indeed," replied he, "I will just ride forward if you please." These words Were scarcely uttered when a turn in the road enabled them to see the occasion of their alarm, which was no way diminished by per-Ceiving a cart, in which were a man and two children, coming with the speed of lightning down the road. At a glance, Delmar discovered that the driver had lost all command over the animal, and Beatrice's danger instantly rushed Don his mind. He cast one anxious look at her, as he ordered the coachman, for God's Sake, to draw up as much as possible into the Shallow ditch by the road-side, in hopes the horse might, by some happy chance, take advantage of the space thus afforded him, and a void coming in contact with the Britchska.
 - "Where are you going, Mr. Delmar?" ex-Claimed Lady Heron.
 - "Oh! never mind me," replied he, quickly, as he watched the carriage being placed as he

desired, "nearer the hedge, still nearer," he continued to the coachman, "it will never pass—there, that must do."

"Oh! pray, pray get somewhere safe, Mr. Delmar, there, behind the carriage," urgel Beatrice, surprised by the hazard of the mement into more than unusual expression of her feelings.

"Fear not for me, Miss Heron," he said, with a look which revealed his satisfaction at her solicitude, "I have more than one motive we encourage self-preservation."

"Indeed, Mr. Delmar, I am sure you will get hurt, you frighten me so much by staying so close here, that I hope, for my sake, if not for your own, you will move."

"Where can I be safer, or happier than by you, Miss Heron," he said, in a low tone: "however, for your sake, my life is sacred."

At any other time, his looks and manner would have called the eloquent blood into the cheek of Beatrice, but at this moment all other feeling was swallowed up in fear for his safety, and by a look she testified her thanks. These hurried sentences had passed in the space of a few moments, and the cart was now quite close to the spot.

"You had better stand by that gate, sir," said

the coachman. Mortimer turned to do so, but he had delayed his retreat so long that the danger was close at hand, and he only escaped destruction by leaping his horse over the gate into a field; for the unwieldy vehicle, after dashing past the Britchska, without doing any farther mischief than startling the horses, the terrified animal made a sudden sweep, and brought the cart in contact with the gate-post, and the consequences may easily be imagined. la a moment, its unfortunate occupants were thrown out, the hedge received one child, while its companions were ejected at cither side. The concussion effectually restrained the terrifed horse, for the footman, leaping to the ground, as soon as his mistress's danger was Mst, was enabled to prevent farther mischief by seizing the unguarded bridle.

Beatrice, who had seen the imminent peril of him she loved, and trembled in impotent alarm, was pale and agitated when he, an instant after, again stood by her. Consigning his steed to the coachman, who was now at his horses' heads. he said, "Thank Heaven! you are safe, I scarcely anticipated so fortunate a result."

"We must congratulate you on your escape,

Mr. Delmar," said Lady Heron, "at the same time that we thank you for your attention to us—but do let us out of the carriage, the poor man, I fear, is hurt."

This request was quickly complied with, and, as Delmar handed Beatrice down the steps, their eyes met, and, though hers were instantly cast down, he gathered enough from that glance to encourage him to take advantage of the moment—to warmly press the delicate hand which rested upon his amount approached the place where the footman was raising the sufferer, who seemed perfectly insensible, and was bleeding profusely from a cut on the head.

"Do you not call this an unfortunate result, Mr. Delmar?" said Beatrice, as she gave him her handkerchief, with which he began to him up the wound.

"I was actuated by much more selfish considerations, Miss Heron, when I said those words," returned he. "This accident is indeed bad enough."

Beatrice turned hastily to the child, who appeared little injured, although, after disengaging itself from the hedge, it ran up to its father, crying piteously; the other, Lady

d her daughter endeavoured in vain It screamed terribly, and they soon that its arm was broken. The ab was placed in a sling, and, as was ascertained that the man be-Claybrook, it was agreed that should be sent as soon as the ladies ive at the castle, for the cart was njured to be of any use in conveyan home. Mortimer persisted in with the servant, at the disastrous e benevolent intention of assisting ho now gave some tokens of returntion. The plan was on the eve of in execution, when another party 10, being inhabitants of the village, s of the countryman, readily underall that was necessary in the affair. ng the sufferers placed in the conelonging to the new comers, and every care possible, Mortimer was -mount his horse to accompany his ne, when Lady Heron said, "Come, r, let Thomas ride your horse, while to the carriage with us; you have anger enough to-day to make me nder my own eye. You really were

too rash, besides the twilight is coming on, and, since you professed to have come bere expressly to take care of us, you can attend to your duty better."

It may be supposed he did not require pressing, and he answered in terms of gallattry, as he seated himself opposite Beatrice. The accident furnished ample fund for discussion, as they rapidly approached the castle, and both the ladies joined in commending Mortimer's conduct, at the same time that they expressed their fear at the peril in which he had been placed.

Oh! how delightful is it to one who love, to hear the object of his preference declare an unqualified interest in his behalf! How grateful is commendation from those sweet lips! How penetrating the gentle smile of kindness that attends it!

Mortimer's heart bounded with love and hope, as he listened to the thrilling tones of Beatrice's voice. He felt assured of her affection, and for the satisfaction of that momen he felt he would willingly have risked test times more than he had done. Arrived home, they were met at the door by Sir George in considerable alarm at their delay, but a

Aplanation was soon afforded, and he united in thanking his friend for taking his office for him, and fulfilling it so entirely to his wish.

"Well, Mr. Delmar," said Lady Dinely, with an arch smile, as he handed her to the fining room. "I hear you are again a favourite at Mr. Vernon's."

"I have, indeed, been much there, lately," "plied Mortimer, "but intend being off for ireland, soon."

"Now you do not mean me to give credit to hat declaration, I hope, or I shall absolutely hink you have been saying sweet things to one inconstant fair, and again been repulsed. I shall always think a hasty journey to reland a suspicious manœuvre with you. If memory is a good one, and I recollect, lough some years have past since, that you ft us very suddenly, after a long attendance that same cottage."

Mortimer's dark complexion but ill conled the colour which dyed his cheek at se words, for Beatrice followed close, and uld, most probably, overhear them. More qued and angry than he was aware, he oined, somewhat sharply, "I suppose you nember, Lady Dinely, that Sir George was my companion is the masses we the

the convert name on terms of to his heart who has not been as a laught, separated of Travelum as a horibant. Mr. Dennated to each of the chevalum, armed at all terms.

By this time they had resence to Tell no more was said there, The The offered no absolute their new to which a appears.

The evening was one of permiss me to our hero, he saw minimes for Is though he forbore to anning here it is used of her friends, by any incremmen him his admiration, or rather his mines is so blind, indeed, was he to every mines i him, except her, that he did not ference impressed indignation of Sir Harry I at the flirtation of his wife with a Scotchman who, with his sister, were visit to Sir George.

Our friend Mary, with her change of had not changed her disposition for con on the contrary, it seemed to have a strength by time and circumstance. He

, like many individuals, all smiles so verything was subservient to his will. overbearing temper would bear no Then he became morose, and, as little to do in his marriage, his wife whole force of his harshness, if he leased, which was but too often the demanded constant attention, and bmission on her part, which, in the of matrimony, when all was new, voured to gratify him in; but she g and lively, and finding it was far please generally, than individually, continued to indulge the propensity d cost her the love of her cousin. discovered what a mistake she had er choice, but her high spirit forbad ine at the consequences of her own she wisely reconciled herself, as ossible, to her situation. She seldom hing intentionally to displease Sir at indifference ruled most of her wards him, and soon became a comce against his ill temper, which was ved by this conduct. Thus circumssension ever reigned between them, nless Mary's flirting was very con-Sir Harry never permitted his anger

to appear, in public. That was what he could not tolerate, for he was aware of her disposition before marriage, but had suffered pecuniary considerations to supersede that, and every thing else; consequently, felt more irritated, because he had, he knew, wilfully subjected himself to this constant annoyance. Lady Dinely's manners were naturally engaging, and many were those she captivated for the moment, who, like this north countryman, knew nothing of her character.

It had been Lady Heron's dread that, in this visit, her son should be made uneasy, but to her great joy she soon saw she was mistaken, for Sir George, though kind, was cool, and evidently kept on his guard, particularly when he observed she played her former game. Mortimer, too, knew her of old, and was not to be deceived by her gaiety into any attentions which might pain Beatrice; indeed, as we have already said, his heart was so entirely devoted to the latter that, on the evening in question, he was dead to every thing but her. About twelve o'clock all had retired, except the two friends, and they were standing with their candles lighted, ready separate, when Sir George said, "Well, Delmar, what do you think of Lady Dinely!" not be her husband, Heron, that eplied, laconically.

re about right there," answered to seems just as gay as ever."

rtunate Sir Harry does not mind e," said Mortimer, smiling.

nd it, Delmar, not mind it! why your eyes and ears been the last He has been chafing terribly, and he is in for a famous curtain lect. I hear he has an infernal temper, see how savage he looked at her, ed and talked with Mc Arthur?" eed, I thought he seemed a very in, and only pitied him because I a fool to be so quiet."

g men had again approached the orge drew a chair close to the motioned his companion to do the rejoined, "Ah! you do not know ency if both were more quiet, they appier. Beatrice says, from what old her, they are an ill-assorted yown observations induce me to on very uncomfortably. It is a is really a nice girl, if it were not failing. Not that I would have could," he added, quickly, "for

her perseverance in pursuing Mc Arthur quite disgusted me. I assure you, I cong late myself upon having had a lucky es though I have not told any one so but self; still," he added, pensively, "I c help pitying her, for I think she would been very different with a less mercenary I suppose her money was all he wanted, ever, I should certainly be better satisf he were more kind to her."

When he paused, Mortimer made no at but sat absorbed in thought, and it was evident to George he had been spendin breath in vain. A short silence followed, the baronet resumed as he rose, "You as in a talking humour I fancy, Mortimer, you please, as the fire is none of the brig but, like your conversation, somewhat last I will make my exit."

"I really beg your pardon, Heron, I my inattention extreme; but, I was pond on a subject of vast importance to me, at you are partially interested in the busi perhaps I may as well take the present of tunity of opening my mind to you."

Again Sir George took his place be expiring embers, and Mortimer continue have now, George, been sometime a con

visiter here, and have ever received the greatest attention and kindest welcome from you, and Lady Heron, which, believe me, I fully appreciate."

"What, in the name of all that's miraculous, Mortimer, do you mean by this solemn opening to your confidential information, for such I take your communication to be, from the hour you have chosen to make it—midnight is an ominous time."

"We are not always able to controul our actions, Heron, or I might have selected a fitter occasion for my disclosure; however, not to detain you long, I will be brief. Years have elapsed since I first loved your sister, but I was deterred from declaring myself then, by a fancied coldness on her part. I believe I was to blame—over hasty—for I have every reason to hope that she is willing to listen favourably to my proffered affection. In the last few weeks. I have ascertained that, unless I can obtain her hand, I cannot be happy; and to you wher nearest and dearest relation, I apply for Prmission to plead my cause to her. I need not explain my prospects, my intentions, farther: our acquaintance is not the creation of a week or month."

The baronet had purposely avoided inter-

rupting his companion during his statement; but, as soon as he concluded, he replied, with a glowing cheek and pleasure sparkling in his eve. "What you have just said does not surprise me, my dear Mortimer. I know how excellent, how delightful, Beatrice is, and I have not been blind to the growing attachment of That she is worthy of every senmy friend. timent of love and esteem I am well aware, and had I felt any alarm, or had I not thought that he was a man calculated to make her as happy as she deserves to be. I would long ago have put a stop to an acquaintance which might have destroyed her peace of mind. No, Delmar, did I not feel perfectly convinced Beatrice's happiness would be safe in your keeping, you had not found the welcome here you have done. But I think you said she is still ignorant of your preference?"

"I did, George: as far as words are corcerned, she is. I desired to know your sentiments before I explained myself to her—"

"For my sister I must not answer, though! believe I might safely do so; but for myself, I can truly say that the man who has been my dearest friend so long, I shall be most happy to receive as a brother. My good mother you must speak to yourself in the morning, for 1

shall leave you to work your own way, unless you require my services, being convinced such things are best managed by the party most interested." As he spoke, he offered his hand to his friend, who said, as he grasped it warmly, "You have done all I require, George, and I thank you for it, you have made me the happiest fellow in the world."

"You forget that I am only an inferior potentate," returned the baronet, laughing, "whose opinion you have consulted. Do not be too sanguine of success—woman is an incomprehensible being."

"Oh! I have very little fear—good night, George," answered our hero, again taking his candle, and then leaving the room.

"Well!" thought Sir George, as he stood still a moment before he followed him, "well! langlad both for Beatrice's and his own sake, that he has candidly avowed his attachment; and I am sure, my dear mother will be greatly rejoiced at it, for Mortimer holds no insignificant place in her esteem, and her highest pleasure is to make her children happy. Mary, too, she would have saved from sorrow, if possible."

CHAPTER XI.

In the mild eyes that shone before him, Beaming that blest assurance, worth All other transports known on earth, That he was loved—well, warmly loved.— MODE.

We must pardon Mortimer, if, on the kind accordance of Sir George, he for a space forgot all the anxiety, all the trouble, he had recently experienced, and gave himself up entirely to the pleasing realization of his hopes, which he foresaw the next day would produce. Blessed with such sleep as is known only in youth, the night was quickly spent, and the lover rose the following morning with alacrity, to take another important step towards the goal of felicity. Knowing Lady Heron to be an early riser, and that she passed sometime in her boudoir before the breakfast hour, which was ten o'clock, he de-

ight be decided without delay. "Then, suit prospered, he should meet his I Beatrice with two-fold delight, while, he contrary—but, he could not think of lure—had not George given him every agement, every reason to believe he not be rejected? and it was madness to plate the dark side."

Heron's morning room was not a ree of luxury, or of selfish enjoyment,
she kept entirely to herself. No! she
far too fond of seeing smiling faces
her, to like an apartment dedicated to
and solitude. It was a kind of study
wooks, music, or work, were the amuseand where all who liked such recreaere welcome. Here, Mortimer had spent
appy hours in the society of Beatrice,
I fed his growing love upon her smiles,
med rapturously to her voice, as she
I the airs he selected.

s about half past nine, when he stood door of this little sanctorum, irresolute: to enter at once, or to knock for ad-, and he had just determined upon the when it was opened, and Lady Heron d in the act of coming out. "My dear madam," he said, without any hesitation.

"you must pardon my early intrusion, but come to solicit a few moments' conversation with you, previous to our meeting for the day."

"I need scarcely say your request is grantal with pleasure, Mr. Delmar," she returned, and, re-entering the apartment, whither he followed her, "though I hope," she added, with an enquiring look, "your unexpected visit is not occasioned by any alarming occurrence? You seem agitated!"

"Dispel your fears then, dear Lady Heron, nothing has happened to my knowledge to call forth your anxiety. I am come to place my future fate in your hands: to be sentenced by one word from you, to bliss or misery-to demand, in short, your consent to becoming the possessor of your daughter's hand. I have loved her long, Lady Heron, she is all my has conceived most estimable, imagination most delightful in a wife-and I intreat you will not destroy my dreams of happiness. me aspire to a place in your affection beside my friend, and I promise you shall never have to repent granting me the privilege of a sea. My every thought, every care, shall be for Beatrice, and all in the power of affection shall be employed to form her felicity. I am not an dept at professions, but my actions shall testify my love for her, and my gratitude to you, if you grant my petition."

The good lady's eyes were suffused with tears, and an instant elapsed ere she rejoined. "Your request, Mr. Delmar, is one of great importance to a mother, perhaps more so to me than many others, for, in my dear Beatrice, I have found the kind friend and attentive nurse, as well as the exemplary daughter—to resign her to another will, therefore, be a struggle, but all selfish considerations shall be set aside for her good, if what you have asked will tend to such. George, however, must be consulted."

"I am not under any alarm on his account.

Lady Heron," interrupted Delmar, "he has already given me the strongest assurances of his approbation of my suit. On yourself, and Beatrice, only, depend my hopes and fears, my pleasure, or pain, and I trust you will not keep me in a cruel suspense."

"Beatrice's choice, my dear Mr. Delmar, ever has, and ever must be perfectly unbiassed by me—she is quite competent to judge for herself—and I may therefore say that you may apply to her in all confidence, for I know that without her heart, you could never obtain her

hand. If my voice be necessary to pave your way, it will be heard only in the language of a parent, anxious for her child's well-being, and I have no hesitation in saying that, were I to select a partner for her, I know of no one l could have preferred to the young friend who now stands beside me-Nay, do not thank me vet, Mr. Delmar," she continued, with a smile, as he began to pour forth his gratitude, "do not thank me yet, Beatrice is the principal person to be gained; therefore the most arduous part of the business is still to be overcome." (Mortimer smiled.) "Your looks declare you are searless on that point. Well! I will go to Beatrice, and apprise her of the honour you intend her; for I am sure you have not intimated your sentiments to her, for she has no secrets from me."

"Your are right, dear madam," replied the happy Delmar, "I have not spoken to Miss Heron, but, since I have obtained your concurrence, I beg you will allow me to plead my own cause—I believe Beatrice is already my own, but permit me to be the first to ascertain that point?"

"You shall," returned Lady Heron, kindly, "I will not deprive you of so great a pleasure—I will send for her here." So saying, she laid

hand on the bell, but was deterred from iding it by the entrance of her daughter, was instantly on the point of retreating, a she saw Delmar. Lady Heron, however, "Beatrice, my dear, come in—we want in our counsels."

I came to say, mama, that the breakfast is y, and that Mary and Sir Harry are both n," answered Beatrice, coming in.

l will not keep them then," replied her er, "but will leave you to answer the tion Mr. Delmar came to ask me."

to cheek of Beatrice flushed, as Lady Heron ted the room, and, for an instant, she aped undecided whether or not to follow her: our hero did not give her time to hesitate , for the door had scarcely closed upon Heron, when he said, "I trust you are roing to refuse the office your mother has rated you to perform, Miss Heron-I hope uestion is not one calculated to alarm you." e looked at him, with a faint smile, as he her hand, which trembled violently, his he knew was hardly more steady, as he "You will stay to hear me declare, indeed I believe you have known some how much my happiness is in your handslong, how fondly, I have contemplated the hour, when I might consider myself authorised, by your kindness, to throw myself on your generosity, and ask the inestimable gift of this little hand-Let me flatter myself vou have seen my unceasing endeavours to win your esteem, your love, Beatrice-my never failing attempts to obtain that favour, which must eventually ripen into affection. But tremble not so, I am the one to feel alarmed, who see the seal of my fate as yet undecided-Speak to me, Beatrice, in pity speak to me-Am I to call you mine?" As he spoke the last words, he led her gently to a chair, and, while she struggled with her feelings, and strove to speak. he again said, "This silence gives me courage, dear Beatrice, for I am sure you would never deceive me by false hopes. Our acquaintance is not new, you have known me as the friend of your brother, and I have loved you ardenly long, long before I had any reason to believe you returned my affection."

"My mother," said Beatrice, faintly, as her tears began to flow in unrestrained freedom.

"Your mother consents," rejoined Mortimes, "and if your hesitation proceeds from that uncertainty, my doubt is solved, for, from her, I hold a kind declaration of her consent—give me then, dearest, one little word to seal sy cossession of this coveted treasure—I could after you rank, and wealth, did I think such would enhance the value of my love—but I should scorn to owe, to such paltry means, a hand I could not gain from love."

He spoke warmly, perhaps more haughtily than he intended, and his companion cast her swimming eyes up towards his face in some surprise; but she said, with tolerable composure, "I reciprocate that feeling, Mr. Delmar, and were anything to make me hesitate at this moment, it would be the prospect of a coronet, which, I believe, is not unfrequently a crown of thorns."

"You shall not find it so, Beatrice: why not consider it a wreath of roses, the brilliancy and sweet odour of which shall be emblematical of the soft smiles and breathings of love!—It shall be my study to realise this picture, when leaven wills that I should support the dignity of our house—May that day be at present far emoved! But you have not yet bid me hope, lough I dare not think of the reverse—suffer se once more to ask—that dear hand is——"

"Yours, Mr. Delmar," interposed Beatrice, rmly extending it towards him, and, at the ame time, placing the other over her burning row.

We need not detail how many fervent kisses Mortimer impressed upon that cherished hand, or how his heart bounded lightly in his breast, as he heard her last words, neither do we deem it necessary to relate the numberless yows and extravagances of a lover-a fortunate lover, when he learns, for the first time, that he is in turn beloved; but will simply inform our readen that an hour had elapsed ere Beatrice or Mortimer recollected that breakfast was waiting, or that love was not an antidote to hunger. Happy, however, as the former was, she could not immediately join the party round the breakfast table, she could not encounter the numerous enquiries on her unusually late appearance, and, therefore, on leaving the boudoir. she sought her own room, while the joyous Delmar repaired to the parlour. He skilfully parried Lady Dinely's jests upon his tardiness, and Lady Heron was not long in discovering by his looks how his conference with her daughter had terminated. She soon after learnt from Beatrice, in what manner his proposals had been received, and George united with ber in expressing entire approbation of the cosnection.

"Now, my dear fellow," said the young Baronet, after he had heard Mortimer's success, shook him by the hand, "now I may say ong I have desired and hoped for this—how long I have seen that you and my sister were fitted to each other, and how tly I am satisfied with the new relation stines for me. That you will not repent choice I can safely promise, for, although ther's praises may not be strictly admis-I cannot help saying that she is all a should look for in matrimony; and, if ness be not your portion, no pity will you om me, for I shall then look suspiciously my friend."

hat time will never come, dear George," Seatrice, who had entered the room, and the latter part of his speech. "If Morbe as determined to follow the dictates of and affection as I am, happiness must be nsequence."

o you doubt it, Beatrice?" said her lover is smile, testifying at once his pleasure at nswer, and confidence in her love. She donly by giving him her hand, and, as see turned away, he said, with a laugh, il, I am glad you are so confident in other; but what think you of a walk, or for I see Sir Harry going to his darling

haunt. You stay with us to-day, of course, Delmar?"

- "Most willingly, George, but I believe I must write a few lines to Ellen, who expected me home to-day."
- "Why not go over to her?" said his friend, "You can be back long before dinner. I am sure Beatrice will allow the justice of your going to the cottage."

Delmar turned, enquiringly, to her, and she said, "I hope you do not think it necessary to disappoint Ellen, on my account, Mr. Delmar; I should be sorry to be the cause of giving her pain, which your remaining here this morning might effect. You had better go, but need not stay long. Remember, I wish you to do as you think best."

"Your wish is a command, Beatrice," he replied, "and I will obey." Mortimer, accordingly, speedily gallopped to Claybrook, where he was, as usual, most welcome.

The subsequent three or four days rolled away in the gratifying duties required of Mortimer by Beatrice and the invalid. The former, in avowing her love, had thrown aside all that chilling reserve, all that distance, which had equally pained and deceived her love,

and appeared in her real character of an affectionate girl, ready to bestow her entire confidence on the man she preferred, not for any worldly considerations, but from esteem based on the purest feelings.

Ellen continued much in the same state, though she would not permit Mortimer to entertain hopes of her permanent amendment. "My sand is not yet expended, dear Mortimer," she said to him on one occasion, "and perhaps, indeed, some time may elapse ere I am called away: but I cannot bear to see you rest your expectations upon so precarious a foundation as the momentary pause in my complaint, before it takes its last stride towards the great goal for which we all must ma. I am content with the prospect, therefore why these vain regrets? Let me hear them no more, but tell me rather about the sentle friend you say has consented to become Jour wife. She is so good, so amiable, that, dd I not know Mortimer Delmar so well, I would tremble, from experience, for her. Yet," the added, in a low, mournful tone, "Har-Fave was all love, all affection to me-though lamilton has destroyed me."

Delmar, anxious to withdraw her from so ad a topic, complied with her request, and spoke of Beatrice, whom he told her he should depute his substitute at Claybrook on his departure, which could not now be long delayed. Beatrice, by her kindness, had won the regard of the mourner, and her frequent visits latterly, had afforded both comfort and consolation to her; it was, therefore, with the most sincere pleasure that she learnt Mortimer's attachment, and the probability of her assuming his office during the period of his unavoidable absence. It may, perhaps, be deemed strange, nay, even imprudent. by the over fastidious, for Beatrice to devote a portion of her time to the benevolent employment of soothing, or endeavouring to soothe the sorrows of the unhappy Ellen. It is true, she had become the dupe of an artful villain, and had unconsciously sullied her fair fame, and, in the eyes of the world, she was unworthy of notice, but, in the estimation of those who knew her, she was only the innocent. the suffering victim. Her thoughts, her feelings, were as pure as ever, and the Herons were far too high minded to permit prejudice, or fastidiousness, to overcome their kindness. They saw Ellen afflicted, both in mind and body. and one and all strove to alleviate her sorrows. Perhaps Beatrice's growing partiality for

er heightened her pleasure in comforte mourner, since she observed how he took their disinterested attention. week which the young lover had fixed. term of his farther stay, now wanted days more of its completion, when he with Beatrice in the pony phaeton, to e morning with Ellen. Half an hour's rought them to their journey's end, Delmar found letters requiring his ate presence in the Metropolis. ome summons had been delayed until t moment, in expectation of his daily , and, consequently, no time was to be A shade of vexation passed over Morcountenance, as he re-folded the obs epistle, and stood in deep thought. u are uneasy, Mortimer," said Beatrice, as the first to notice his dissatisfaction. m." he replied, "but scarcely ought to for this letter only calls me hence fourenty hours sooner than I had intended re you; compelling my departure by row's early coach. Indeed, I fancy it to go to-night-but do not look so d, dear Beatrice, I will certainly postly journey until the morning." ot for me, dear Mortimer, if you think it better to go sooner," answered Beatrice, "
would not have you consider me in the least
I am too confident of your unwillingness to
pain us to think you would enforce an unnecessary measure."

"You are right, dear friend," answered Ellen, pressing her hand, "you do him justice, but it is difficult to resign one whole day of his loved society, on the brink of the grave."

Her eyes filled with tears as she spoke, and Beatrice said, in surprise, "The grave, Ellen! why alarm us at this moment with such an idea?"

"Mortimer is not alarmed, Beatrice, ke knows the truth too well; but here comes Mr. Vernon—not a word on this subject whilst he is here."

The good rector was soon informed of the annoying contents of the letter, and joined is the general disappointment. "But, my dear young friends," he said, "I trust we shall some day meet again, under more favourable auspices, and happier times, when the gleon of our recent trial shall have worn of, and Ellen's health will be fully re-established." The invalid smiled sadly, and he continued, as he looked kindly at Beatrice, "I know that, while we lay an embargo upon the movements."

ss Heron, we are sure to have the e of seeing you again, Mr. Delmar,

rice blushed, and Mortimer replied. my dear sir, more than one fetter has me here, and I hope long to be held a captive in such light, but durable " Affection beamed in his eye, and he answering look from his companions, ter discussing his departure, which was to take place on the morrow, confor some hours, to find that pleasure d converse which must cmanate from estrained communion of three minds so nd vet so various in their textures and ents. Alas! why should hours of hapspeed on the wings of the wind, and way almost before we can taste the iting draught!

friends found this truth forcibly, when 'clock arrived, and it was time to sepa-Beatrice had been made acquainted len's secret, and she sorrowed at one same time for her poor friend and her while Mortimer was affected in leaving over whom he had unwillingly drawn tain of grief, and, possibly of death; divining his forebodings, murmured

in a tone too low for Mr. Vernon to hear, he pressed the tribute of affection upon her hectic cheek, "Grieve not, my dearest brother, something tells me we do not part now for the last time. Three months—and then tarry set on your return."

As he drove away he waved his hand, and, after returning the tender adieu, she retired to pour out her soul in prayers for his preservation.

Greatly as Beatrice felt the approaching loss of her lover, she had instantly consented to, nay, had urged, his absence, because the had so little regard for herself, when the advantage, or the duty, of one she loved was implicated. She would not, by a single regret, add to his pain in leaving her, or by repeated injunctions of constant correspondence and hasty return, augur a doubt of his fidelity. She rather strove to dissipate the temporary sadness the near approach of his journey can over him. Mortimer saw her design, and he loved her the better for it.

It was intended that our hero, after accomplishing Mrs. Hamilton's business in town, should proceed forthwith to secure Lord Fits Eustace's approval to his marriage, for, up to the present time, he had not made his fallity

aware of his prospects, intending to wait until he could personally confer with his noble relations, upon so delicate and important a subject. In the course of three months he purposed returning to claim the hand of Beatrice, and then, as soon as circumstances would permit, he was to be united to her. Tais had already been discussed and settled, consequently, there was not anything to interrupt the calm flow of their affection during the few short hours of their being together. Many were the hopes and fears Delmar expressed in regard to Ellen, in which his gentle friend entirely sympathised, promising to see her frequently, to convey every consolation in her power, and rigidly to preserve silence on the subject of her fatal anticipations, from all, except Lady Heron.

"With her dearest Mortimer," she said, fondly, as he leant over the back of the sofa on which she was sitting somewhat apart from the rest of the party, who were crowded round some valuable prints, just arrived from the continent, "with her I have no concealments, and her more potent care, I know, will instantly be united to mine in this matter."

"That I leave to your discretion, Beatrice; you have heard why Ellen wishes the circum-

stance unknown at present, and I fearlessly confide in your promise to summon me here on her account, if alarming symptoms should arise. I saw Brownlow yesterday, who still hopes a favourable change, though I can perceive he is less sanguine than he was. I hardly know if it be kind to wish her to recover, for I find such a fearful wreck of happiness in her heart, whenever I have ventured to touch upon the past, that it quite surprises me how she can cover her deep wounds with so placid a deportment."

- "I believe it is for your sake, Mortimer; for her old nurse Margaret told me, a few days since, that she wished you never left the cottage, for her poor young lady did nothing but fret then."
- "Hah, indeed! what a violence she must do her feelings for me, then!"
- "What cannot love do, Mortimer?" Beatrice enquired, affectionately.
- "It cannot always overcome selfish med, Beatrice," he replied, sadly, "as Ellen has discovered, to her cost."
- "True, I had forgotten that, but I ment virtuous love; not passion."
- "I believe love is omnipotent, whether for good or ill, Beatrice, but the affection of me

and women is widely different, although, perhaps, equally powerful. I fear our sex has rarely manifested the devotion of yours, and if Ellen have acted as you say, it is another proof of her superiority. Poor thing! would to heaven I had been able to shield her from her present misery!"

"Do you know, Mortimer, when first you became acquainted with this village blossom, I was tempted to fear and dislike her."

"Ah! you did not know her, then—you knew not her worth."

"Say rather, I did not know you, Mortimer. I did not know how much I wronged the love I coveted, and which I yet repulsed. Although I was angry with myself for appearing unkind, I could not change while I thought she was referred to me. The mystery was never explained, until your sudden return."

"And then, perhaps, you pitied me," said he, smiling. "I can welcome the sentiment in that instance, because we are told it is 'akin to love.' But come," he continued, "let us see these prints, upon the merits of which George is descanting so scientifically."

No farther conversation passed between them, as they joined in the evening's amusements, and the hours flew by on time's ever revolving wheel. The coach, by which Delmintended to travel, passed the Park gates nine o'clock, therefore scanty time was happily available for leave-taking, that most painfil gratification, which is ever dreaded, yet ever sought!

Words were few—neither were given to prefessions, and the soft language of the eye conveyed more meaning than the greatest cloquence. They separated with looks of confidence, which did not belie the feelings which rested in the heart of each, and the "first kins of love" impressed by Mortimer on the cheek of Beatrice, appeared the seal of his trut, Sir George accompanied his friend across the park, and he commenced his journey, lader with the best wishes of the Herons, for his safe and speedy return.

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CHAPTER XIL

Then with a father's frown at last. He sternly disapproved.

MALLET.

Business detained Mortimer fully as long in the Metropolis as he had anticipated, and it was not until the end of six weeks, from his quitting the castle, that he reached Ireland. He found Mrs. Hamilton so much depressed in spirits that Lord Fitz Eustace was anxious to remove her to the continent, a plan she had hitherto strongly opposed, preferring strict seclusion for the present, at least. His Lordship, however, seemed bent upon setting off in the course of a short time; for, on the very first evening of his son's arrival, he exposed his whole intentions, and endeavoured to persquade Mortimer to accompany them. This, of course, was declined, and when Delmar saw that his refusal excited his father's surprise,

be candidity owned he was under the necessity of returning to England in a month at farthest. But for what purpose," he said, "he must beg to defer mentioning until the following merning, when it was his intention to request a few minutes' private conversation with his localship."

An audience was readily granted, and, consequently. Mortimer followed his father from the breakfast-table to the library. "Well Mortimer." commenced the latter, as the door closed upon them, why have you made this demand? Not to trouble me any more, I hope, with that confounded Claybrook business, for, as I have granted the annuity, I consider myself exempt from farther taxation of any kind."

"I am sorry, my Lord," began his son, when he interrupted him hastily—

"Nay, I thought as much, I would have told you my suspicions last night, Mortimer, had I not feared to distress your sister, by a reference to that subject—I will have nothing more to do with it, and, I must say, I am not a little astonished at your taking so much interest in a person, who has involved your family partly, in her own disgrace."

"You mistake, my lord, in supposing I came to make demands upon your generosity, or, to displease you by an unnecessary recurrence to past events. I know, from experience, the painful nature of the subject too well to recal it. No, my Lord, I wish to discharge my duty conscientiously to all, and therefore deliver this paper as I received it, without a single comment." As he spoke, he laid a letter on the table, and continued, "On my own affairs, principally, I would speak."

Lord Fitz Eustace immediately opened the letter, notwithstanding his asserted desire to be spared farther annoyance from Claybrook; and Mortimer, perceiving his design, instantly paused. An enclosure dropped on the table, which his lordship disregarded, while he perused the few words traced in the envelope. "Mortimer," he then said, sternly, "you know the contents of this?"

"Pardon me, sir, I only guessed. That letter was committed to my charge at the moment of my departure."

"By whom?"

"Ellen, herself, sir."

. "And do you believe she wrote that of her own accord? Read it—" He put the paper into his son's hand, and, while the latter cast his eye over the lines, the baron raised the order for the sum of money, which he had sent

to Mr. Vernon, and, after looking over it,
liberately committed it to the flames. To
note ran as follows:—

"MY LORD,

Permit me to enclose you the paper bearing year if nature, and written in my favour. Your munificence, my Lord, is as useless as it is unwelcome; the first, became I have a provision in heaven, of which I shall soon will possession; and the second, on account of the contempt ble light in which you must hold me. Yet, think not, refusing your bribe, I intend farther to importune or the grace you, as you seem to fear. No! my Lord-all the ill I have ever known has been derived from vot yours, consequently, I can have little inducement to fine myself into the notice of a Nobleman who has wrong and now despises, me. But you have still another, even surer guarantee of my silence, in the affection I feel your son, whose excellence I venerate-Never shall have the cause to blush on account of my connection him, although to dare to call him a brother—would him been my proudest prerogative.

I am, my Lord,
The dying ELLES.

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When Mortimer looked up, his father we peated the question, and the former replied the affirmative.

"And is she indeed one so much above to common herd as to spurn wealth? Then I we been mistaken in supposing that town will were ever found in low stations." he has the high spirit of a Fitz Eustace, ord."

ye! and the worm will turn if trodden eturned Lord Fitz Eustace, thoughtfully. she is ill it seems."

In the domain of a recovery, I believe, sir."

In the present, we can discuss her case retime," he said hastily. "What does no business relate to?"

- less important an event than my ge, sir."
- our marriage!" repeated his father, in arprise, "your marriage, Mortimer!" s, indeed sir, and I flatter myself, one ill entirely approve—Miss Heron is ted, in every way, to make me happy, p gratify you in the quality of a er-in-law."
- lady, whose name you mention, is the presume of your friend Sir George,"
 Baron, coldly.

imer merely bent his head, in answer to irtial interrogatory; and proceeded to n undisguised exposition of his sentiand prospects, during which Lord Fitz e did not attempt to interrupt him, but when he concluded, the former said, "And ye expect my sanction to this match?"

"I hope you see no objection to it, sir?"

His father thought a moment, and then me plied: "I would your matrimonial search had been somewhat more lofty, Mortimer, for I cannot say the daughter of a baronet is the partner I desire for my heir—Perhaps the family is ancient?"

"I know not my lord," answered the your lover, with a flushed cheek, "it is one of unquestionable respectability, and that is quive sufficient for me."

"I cannot say that is all I look for in your union, Mortimer. I have always expressed my wishes for you to seek a noble alliance."

"You have, my lord, though my sentiment, on this point, have never been similar to your. But had I been so inclined, my sister's the would have deterred me from separating my hand from my affections."

"True," returned his father, speaking elecly, at the same time walking to and fac, it evident uneasiness. "You have certainly cause to take warning from her, nevertheless. Mortimer, a wife is not so capable of actual erroneously, and the experiment, in your cast would not be so dangerous." ould not distress you, but I have had a proof of the necessity of choosing a he qualities of her mind, rather than less valuable possessions, ever to k or beauty for themselves only." would instance Jane Vernon, I suprtimer," he rejoined, gloomily, "and you are right, though I cannot apur choice at all." Seeing his son's larm, he added, "However, be that as I must have time to think over this ich has come upon me rather unex-

You shall have my opinion in a

l abide your own time, Sir, but I beg member your single voice will make r happiness, and that no other woman Heron shall ever call me husband." 'itz Eustace made no reply, but sat his writing-table, and Mortimer left spatch some business with his bailiff, he had sent.

was a marked coldness in the manner iron, which alarmed our hero, for he red, unless he could obtain his free Beatrice never would think of giving hand; and his father's indomitable rank made him tremble for the result

of his demand. To his sister he immediately imparted his hopes and anxiety, for in her be was sure of finding the kindest sympathy. To her he fondly descanted on the merits of her le loved, and derived no inconsiderable pleasure is making her as much acquainted with Beatrice's character as possible, by description; and many were the smiles elicited from Mrs. Hamilton, as he dwelt with rapture on her superior merits. Again, and again, he expressed his apprehensions of the obduracy of Lord Fitz Eustace, and demanded her opinion ou the subject, for, as no farther notice was taken of his declaration by his father that day, be had ample time to torment both himself and her by his uneasiness. He would have repeated his application, but was deterred by Maris, who advised him to exert his patience still a little longer. "By urging his lordship for an immediate answer, Mortimer," she said, one day, as he was complaining of the length of time he had to wait, "you may irritate him, and consequently, provoke a harsh sentence. I cannot say I anticipate so much evil from his silence as you do, for I am sure he has suffered too much from the consequences of his former scheme, to oppose your views."

"Then why keep me in this torturing suppense, Maria? I cannot endure it, for I dan

not write again to my poor Beatrice, until I can communicate something of importance. She is aware of my safe arrival here, and I promised my next letter should contain my father's answer. Indeed, Maria, I think it is impossible for me to wait in this cruel uncertainty any longer. Five days have elapsed since I told him, and he looks so sternly at times at me that I am almost convinced he will refuse his consent. By Heavens! if he do, the Poles will gain a soldier—and he lose a son!"

"Dearest Mortimer," answered his sister, affectionately, "wait yet another day quietly, I am as anxious as yourself to see your mind set at rest, but I know how severe will be the struggle between the wish for your happiness and our father's desire for your more exalted marriage; as it was not many days before your arrival, that he was speaking to me of his expectations for you, and I can assure you," she added, smiling, "in his opinion, no hand is worthy your solicitation, unless it be accompanied by a coronet."

"I know it, I know it, Maria, and most sincerely do I grieve such is the case; but, I will do as you advise with respect to my father, though I must say it is very provoking, as I want to write to the castle."

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CHAPTER XIII.

DURING the time that Lord Fitz Eustace safered to elapse, before he resumed the subject so anxiously looked for by his son, he mixed little with his family, and seemed much gaged with the improvements he was making on his extensive estates; and this hurt timer the more, because he thought this insignificant employment had superseded the consideration of his claims. Having said would abide his father's pleasure, he was willing to break his word, and had there willing to break his word, and had there it ions, but beyond that day he was resolved to extend his silence.

Mrs. Hamilton had retired to the drawler room that day after dinner, when her brown

stily entered, and with a countenance beamg with delight, rapturously embraced her.
Thank you most kindly, dearest Maria," he
aid, "for my father's concession—he has told
behow much the consent, which he has just
accorded to my marriage, is owing to your
materies. You have conferred an incalculable benefit upon me, for I am sure I should
better have induced him to concede the point
without your generous interposition—I cannot
supress my gratitude."

"Nay, Mortimer, you rate my service far ligher than it deserves. I flatter myself he voild have vielded even without my soliciation, though I suppose I did influence him mewhat in 'your favour, which, believe me, ratified me not a little. But I was not sure I id succeeded in my object to my entire satisction, for my father made me no promise." "I will tell you all about our conversation en. Maria," said the delighted brother, plac r himself beside her on the sofa. "I left s lordship asleep over the fire, therefore, we all not be interrupted yet. He began by king me several questions with regard to e Heron family, which I answered most adily, you may be sure, since I was very ippy to hear him revert to the business, and after he had listened to what I had to re-urge, I fancied very coldly, he said, 'Mortimer, you may have been surprised at my delaying so long to give you any answer about your marriage, but you know how solicitous I have ever been for your advantage, and I was unable to make up my mind to speak to you again, because my wishes and yours I knew to be quite at variance.' I began to be quite alarmed, Maria, at so solemn a tone, and attempted to answer, but he prevented me by going on to say, that he had at last determined to refuse on the score of inequality of station. Upon this I rose hastily, and doubtless I looked both hurt and angry. I am sure I felt so—"

"Well!" said Mrs. Hamilton, "what did you say?"

"Simply, nothing, Maria," for I was confounded—another minute would have found his lordship alone, as I was rushing from the room, half wild with disappointment, when my father's hand laid on my arm, with more affectionate kindness than I think I ever experienced before, stopped me. He told me with a smile to hear all he had to say, and not to be so hasty. Though much irritated, I strove to be calm, and his looks encouraged me to hope for a better conclusion to his speech, therefore

paused, and when also he mentioned yournecest in my behalf I was almost breathless
ith anxiety. But after a little circumlocution,
ny kind sister, he informed me that, owing
attrely to your arguments and expostulations,
had revoked his resolution, and that he
rould, for the sake of your happiness and my
ociety—mind that, Maria, my society—agree
my proposal. Oh! how relieved I felt, how
makful to you for standing up for me, though
had rather you had not repeated my declaraon of leaving the country, if my views were
lwarted."

"Perhaps, dear Mortimer, a selfish feeling duced me to take advantage of those untarded words, for I could not bear to part ith you just now."

"Whatever the motive, I am sure it was a ad one, Maria, and as such esteem it. My ther then spoke a little of my future plans, tappeared very thoughtful; so, as soon as I d declared my grateful sense of his concesm, I hastened to thank you, and make you a rticipator in my joy. How I wish it were t too late to write to Beatrice to day! Dear I, how happy she will be."

'Never mind, Mortimer, you will have more to for all you have to tell her. Did my father appear quite reconciled to the match?"

"I fear not quite, though I am convinced, if he were to see Beatrice, all his lingering objections would be dissipated."

Mrs. Hamilton smiled, as she said, "You would not be a fond lover, Mortimer, if you did not think so: however, from what you have told me of her, I must agree with you, and doubtless all will now go on according to you most sanguine wishes."

"But if you go to the Continent so soon, Maria, I shall be deprived of the satisfaction of your and my father's presence at my welding. He still seems resolute to go."

"Do not vex yourself on that account, my dear brother, should my father really inside upon my changing the scene, I will go over to Merton Hall, and so keep him near you at present. For myself," and as she spoke, her cytal filled with tears, "I am no fit attendant for such a festival, though my most fervent wishes for your happiness, you well know, will be yours."

Delmar pressed her hand, but perceiving that the subject was one which recalled her own unhappy union to her mind, he turned the conversation into another channel. By the following post, he informed Beatrice of the

successful issue of his journey, promising also. s soon as he could leave Ireland with proriety, he would return to the North. is absence he had heard constantly both from her and Ellen, and from their letters he learnt the passing occurrences in Claybrook and its ricinity. The communications of each breathed the greatest affection for him, though the pleasare Mortimer derived from their receipt was lloyed by the accounts they frequently gave A Ellen's failing strength. The gentle Beatrice informed him that she observed a gradual thange for the worse to take place in the poor invalid from the date of his departure, and she was sure Ellen was as alive to it as those tround her, though, for Mr. Vernon's sake, she still combatted her depression and increasing illness in his presence. Ellen's letters also to Mortimer were couched in a way to ease his mind, though, at times, the unsteadiness of the characters, and an unguarded expression convinced him she was far more indisposed than the represented herself to be. Sometimes, when the declared her temporary improvement, and wrote in a cheerful manner, Mortimer was empted to think Beatrice's fears had magnified he danger, but, at other moments, he fancied be contrary was the case. Thus every letter

had tormented, at the same time it consoled and gratified, him. He heard also that Lady Dinely and her husband had returned home shortly after he left the castle, where they still remained; but, great uneasiness was entertained for them by the family, as they hear from various quarters of the disorder of Sir Harry's affairs. Certain it was that his estate in the country was on sale, and Lady Dinely had spoken even during her visit of plan of going abroad. "These things," wrote the baronet, " make us fancy all is not as it should be, and, added to Mary's confession to my mother, of her being far from happy with Dinely, grieves us much. She owned her child is her sole blessing from her union."

This child, Mortimer recollected to have heard his friend say, Lady Heron had wished should accompany its parents on their visit, but was disappointed in consequence of Sir Harry's refusing to travel with so troublesome a companion, it being scarcely nine months old. Such were the details Delmar had received up to the period of his obtaining his father's somewhat unwilling assent to his marriage; details which had given him pain, although he was quite prepared for them. Ellen's state he felt to be almost hopeless,

the accounts of her did not alarm him iently, at present, to make him change his tion of staying a month in Ireland.

ch succeeding letter, however, from the of his joyful dispatch to Beatrice, cond more fearful intelligence, and while Morr contributed in the highest degree to the ually renovating spirits of Mrs. Hamilton, with Lord Fitz Eustace, arranged his future s. he was distressed by hearing of the i decline of the unfortunate Ellen. et of her danger could no longer be connd from Mr. Vernon, and the old man had st sunk under the blow. The consolations ne Herons, and even those of the invalid elf, were ineffectual to calm his grief, and par's fair correspondent described the ure as being the scene of much distress. n various motives, he had refrained from nunicating his great anxiety respecting to his father, after the first moment of his ral, for he was aware the subject was no sant one to that noble personage; but, in resent crisis he deemed it advisable to dethe truth, as he could no longer restrain mpatience to return to Heron Castle, from h he had now been absent verging on ten CS.

Mrs. Hamilton, according to her promise, had already prevailed upon her father to renounce his intention of going to France for the present, in favour of a visit to England, where she proposed they should remain until Mortimer's marriage, which all his friends united in wishing should take place at Sir George Heron's estate in Hertfordshire. This, having previously determined, Mortimer lost no time in informing Lord Fitz-Eustace of the urgency for his departure earlier than he had originally intended; which plan, as he had feared, met with considerable opposition, his father bavier resolved in his own mind to retain his set until everything was completed for his own journey.

The fact was that the baron had been infinitely more affected by the recent events than those around him had any idea of, he felt that retribution had overtaken him by wounding him where he was most vulnerable. Remove also, in his treatment of Mr. Vernon, agitated him, which was not slightly aggravated by the entire rejection of his bounty by the injured Ellen, while he saw his son, before whom he felt humiliated, cordially received and regarded as a friend at the cottage. By prevailing an Mortimer to prolong his absence, he hoped to

bring about the marriage, which, of itself, was a source of vexation to him, without Mortimer's seturn to Heron Castle, and thus loosen the interest which drew him to that quarter.

Two or three days were thus consumed, before our hero could succeed in reconciling his lordship to his embarkation, and when he had ebtained an unwilling acquiescence, contrary winds prevented the vessel in which he had taken his passage from sailing. This delay was peculiarly destressing, when at the end of a week from the receipt of the letter, which had caused his uncasiness, another arrived, containing still more disastrous information. was on the point of sailing, when it reached him from Sir George Heron, stating that Mr. Vernon had been seized with apoplexy, without my previous increase of indisposition, which had terminated his life in a few hours after. "If possible, my dear Delmar," urged the baronet, "come to us directly, as Ellen feels the shock dreadfully, and my mother and Beatrice fear she cannot last long."

Had Mortimer not already been determined in his intentions, this would have sufficed to consolidate them; scarcely anything now could have stopped him, therefore, putting the letter silently into his father's hand, he watched

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L. w. Fra Electrical deving in a mor even become any ment of the basty lines, turn n de sin son gonta an abrubtness total and the Mortimer, you k we note moved percepts, but I do not & and show the in this time which pains yo • ... re the mains to a alling me to make a ready voice -Ivil on see Ellen."

Y a m and enquired Mortimer, ≥ 904. 1-f.: 310:000.

"Yes " and the really. " I have earned visuer to their Claybrook sometime, but d week to vide vite incomplish it while the of 18.4.1 (F. 1.1)

"Bit in all not leave my sister here, my

"Cortain" v not, but I think she will readily agree to accompany me to Merton Hall, where she can remain while I follow you to the North-I am resolved to set off as soon as every thing can be arranged, for your friend seems to anticipate immediate danger; but do not think I will detain you, Mortimer, as your presence seems of so much consequence. Had I behaved through life as I ought to have done, I should not now be thus punished." As he spoke, his countenance exhibited much concern, but he prevented an immediate reply from Delmar, by adding hastily, "by taking this journey, I shall be introduced to your future wife, which is an additional reason for my taking it."

Mortimer would rather Beatrice and his father should have met any where but at Heron Castle, or its neighbourhood, but he found argument useless; indeed, he did not like to oppose the plan much, on account of the awkwardness of the subject, and, consequently, it was soon settled that Mrs. Hamilton and the Baron should proceed in a few days to London, whence they were to dispatch intelligence to Mortimer respecting their farther movements.

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CHAPTER XIV.

She faded, and so calm and meek,
So softly worn, so sweetly weak,
So tearless, yet so tender—kind,
And grieved for those she left behind—
And not a word of murmur—not
A groan o'er her untimely lot.

BYROK.

Our hero landed at Holyhead, after a favorable passage, and rapidly posted across the
country, in the direction of Claybrook. Various
reasons led him first to the castle, among
which, his desire to see his beloved Beatrice
was undoubtedly the strongest, though, he
also was influenced by his fear of alarming
Ellen by his sudden arrival, as well as by his
incertitude as to her state.

It was yet early when he reached the end of his journey, and on alighting, he was inferred by the servants, that Sir George was out siding,

while the ladies had not yet returned from Mrs. Greville's. By a few farther enquiries, he learnt that Ellen had been removed, immediately on Mr. Vernon's death, to that lady's residence, which was not more than two miles' distant from the castle; the carriage had, however, gone to bring them home, and they were momentarily expected. This being the case. Delmar resolved to await their arrival Patiently; and, entering the drawing room, for some time paced the floor, or sauntered from window to window, occasionally whistling a melancholy or a lively strain, as his thoughts wandered from Ellen to Beatrice. The room being situated on the opposite side of the house from that of the drive, he was not aware of the approach of the carriage until Beatrice herself Opened the door, and, with delight beaming on her countenance, gave him that hurried, vet tender, reception, which told him at once how fondly he was welcome. "How truly happy I am to find you here, Mortimer," she said, "the duty you commissioned me to discharge was becoming almost too responsible."

"Yes, indeed, our poor young friend is in a most anxious state," said Lady Heron, "and although we have done our best for her with pleasure, our trust is willingly restored to you,

for we are aware how much more grateful your kind attentions are to her."

"I feel myself under the greatest obligations both to you and Beatrice, my dear Lady Heron," replied Delmar, "for your fulfilment of my office during my absence, a kindness I can only repay by my future conduct, and indeed—"

"Well, well, dear Mortimer," said Beatrice, smiling, "I am sure my mother will excuse the expression of your obligation, if such your call it, though, for my part I can say, your rather conferred one by making me of use to you; therefore let me tell you about our dear invalid."

"Beatrice says rightly, Mortimer," answered Lady Heron, "we have all felt as much, or more, gratification in our duties than is sufficient to cancel your feeling of gratitude, consequently all that is settled—But where is George, have you not seen him?"

"No, I believe he is not come home yet."

Sir George was not long, however, before he joined the party, and the evening was devoted to social converse, during which, each recounted in detail the events which had occurred. Beatrice dwelt with admiration on the calm resignation and religious hope of their patient, but described her anxiety to see Mortiner

again as being her only wish. Mrs. Greville's almost maternal affection was declared to be unbounded; and, in short, our hero was convinced, by what he heard, that every carthly comfort in the power of friends to confer was at her command. He related, in turn, his father's strange and sudden intention, which was immediately met by the Baronet with the offer of welcome at the castle, should Lord Fitz Eustace intend staying in the vicinity.

By the precautionary advice of Lady Heron. herself and Beatrice preceded Mortimer, some time, on the ensuing morning, at Mrs. Gre-Ville's, in order to prepare Ellen for the first terview with him; and, although he arrived less than an hour after them, she was exhausted by the worry of expectation. Too Weak now to stand or walk, she was carried From her bed into the adjoining chamber, where She occupied a couch, having more the ap-Dearance of death than an animate body. Every originally perfect feature presented a Dainful sharpness, her once rounded form was shrunk to a skeleton; and the hands so plump. so delicate, some few short months before, were now literally nothing but bone.

Beatrice only sat beside her as Mortimer entered, and it was beautiful to see with what

confidence, with what pleasure, the for the being against whom her jealous if firmerly been raised fondly pressed arms of her lover. After having cosome time on the melancholy event whi re-called Mortimer, from which, far it pearing to wish to divert her thought turned, with a sad pleasure, she said looked tenderly in his face, "Oh! hot tall I am for the blessing of your recan now follow my dear Mr. Vernon wince you, my only acknowledged will close my eyes."

"Dearest Ellen," answered Mortimme not your only relation; in a day I believe—I hope, you will be able to futher, yours also."

"Father!—my father—what do yo Mortimer!" she enquired, eagerly, v bright hectic glowed on her cheek.

"I mean, Ellen, that Lord Fitz intends to pay a visit at the castle, and if you be well enough, I hope see him."

"Me see him, Mortimer!" she is shuddering slightly, "Oh no! not not not. Both for his and my own sake, not be—I have no kind protector now,

me this useless pang, so do not take advantage of my forlorn situation. You must feel it is much the wisest way for him, his family and myself, that the curtain of death should be permitted quietly to fall without re-awakening those feelings which have embittered his life and destroyed mine."

"Unless such an interview would gratify you, Ellen, doubtless, it shall be avoided. I considered it would be a source of comfort to you."

"The only comforts I desire now, Mortimer, are derived from you and Beatrice. A few days, and I shall burthen my kind friends no longer—that a tear may not drop for my early fate, I will not do them the injustice to believe; but we shall soon meet again—never more to part." She extended a hand to each of her companions, and her eyes filled with tears, when she saw how deeply both were affected; and she continued, "Now leave me, my kind friends, I am greatly fatigued."

"You have exerted yourself too much," Said Beatrice, as she rose to obey the request, "I must not allow Mortimer to stay so long to-morrow. I am sure Mrs. Greville will say you are very, very tired."

"I shall see you again in an hour or two,

Mortimer?" said the invalid, enquiringle he pressed her hand.

"If you wish it, Ellen, though perhaps etter not come until to-morrow."

"Ah! you must agree with dear Beats suppose you think—still I hope you will in the evening, I am always better then, shall be very jealous of every momen pass away from me now."

Delmar readily promised to do as sl sired, in order to terminate the present for it was apparent to him and Beatric Ellen's countenance, that she was muc tressed and exhausted. The former was and abstracted the remainder of the day, saw with pain the frightful change which taken place in the appearance of the int ing sufferer; and he felt that, as she s very short period would terminate her Beatrice participated in his sentiments independent of the sympathy which is ever to exist between hearts that love had become deeply interested in the in whose tantalizing illness she had now wa for so many weeks. Delmar visited Greville's again that day, but Ellen was too unwell to be disturbed, and she had persuaded by her attendants to postpor visit until the morrow. During the following weekhe continued his constant attendance, and, with Lady Heron and Beatrice, he sought, by the greatest kindness, to alleviate the suffering of the interesting victim of heartless cruelty.

Quickly she sunk, for the death of her beloved Mr. Vernon appeared to have completely destroyed the little strength, or wish, she had left to struggle against disease; she resigned herself to her approaching fate, and cheerfully spoke of the coming change. The day on which Mortimer first saw her after his return was the last she left her room, though, up to the period of her dissolution, she continued to exchange the wearisomeness of her bed for that of the couch, where, each day, she received her kind friends, who were frequently deeply affected by her heart-rending allusions to her sorrows, or her grateful acknowledgements for their care. As often as she could bear it, Mortimer, or Beatrice, read such parts of Scripture as she selected, where-Don her comments edified and convinced her Ompanions that she was fully prepared to luit a world of sin, for an everlasting restinglace. Her child, which she had kept contantly with her at first, was now unable to tay in the room many minutes at a time, for

her weakness; and its striking likeness to its unhappy father induced Mortimer to order it not to be brought into her chamber unnecessarily, since it affected her deeply, for the tenderness of friendship was ever on the watch to avert her from sorrow. The common interest Ellen's illness had, for some time, created in the mind of each, and the constancy of their attendance at the side of her couch, had drawn the knot of love still closer between Mortimer and Beatrice. They lived but for each other, though the care of their mutual friend had, for the moment, banished all thought of their future happiness. The most affectionate istimacy and unbounded confidence subsisted between them; and as, day after day, they sought the mourner to unite in the work of smoothing the path of premature decay. witnessed the piety and holy hope of the dying friend, their warm hearts unconscious! glowed with feelings of that deep affection which, unseen, becomes a part of self, and which nothing can destroy save the loss of life in one, or both! A fabric based on the rock of esteem! Happy would it be for thousands; if their temple of happiness could boast so firm a foundation! Rank, wealth, or beauty, toooften supersede humble merit in the search of felicity, and its victims find, to their cost, that the dazzling bauble is far less valuable than they had anticipated!

One afternoon that the lovers were returning from Mrs. Greville's, an unusually long silence prevailed; and Mortimer, on detecting it, said, as he pressed the hand of his companion, which rested on his arm, "Why so sad, dearest? I fear our poor Ellen's harassing situation preys upon your spirits. I shall not let you go with me again, for a smile on those dear lips is a pleasure I cannot forego."

"Nay, Mortimer, do not think I am made by assisting you in your work of love. he conviction of having imparted comfort to te bruised spirit conveys a pleasing, although melancholy, feeling, for which I must crave dulgence, since I am certain you are imbued ith a similar sentiment. Dear Ellen's conresation is so heautiful that I am sure we ght to feel the contentment she expresses at approach of her dissolution, which I fear not far off."

"I believe you are right, Beatrice, and I nost think my father's journey will be an cless one, independent of her partial refusal see him, should she be able."

"Do you really think his Lordship wi accept my brother's invitation?"

"Yes, indeed; when I left him he was full determined to see Ellen, and, doubtless, the additional incitement of coming to the cash will hasten his arrival."

"Perhaps, Mortimer, you may fancy we unkind, but I cannot help entertaining considerable alarm at the idea of meeting him I fear he will not like me as a daughter-in-law From all, I hear your sister so highly spokes of, that, judging from her example, he may think me unworthy of his son."

"These are idle fancies, my own love, returned Mortimer, fondly, "my father cut appreciate worth; and, though he has, unfortunately, appeared to you in an unfavourable light. I trust, for my sake, you will overcome any unpleasant recollections, and regard his without prejudice. He will not, cannot, be dissatisfied."

"I hope, Mortimer, you do not think me capable of feeling ill-disposed towards and member of your family? I shall see Low Fitz Eustace only as your father, and as such e must be honoured by me."

"Those words are like yourself, dean

Beatrice, ever kind, and generous. Believe me, you will find him far more estimable than some circumstances may have led you to conceive; and, as to Maria, I need only say that you will soon discover in her every noble quality that a brother may be proud of in a beloved sister. Indeed I flatter myself that you will be exactly suited to each other, and quickly become attached, for Maria already knows you by reputation, and is disposed to love you warmly."

"Ah, Mortimer, I fear you have been speaking of me in much higher terms than I deserve, but I will do my best to repay her kindness."

"I know that, Beatrice, and am, consequently, under no apprehensions for the result. All you do is sure to please others, as well as myself."

CHAPTER XV.

C'ould tears retard the tyrant in his course; Could sighs avert his dart's relentless force; C'ould youth and virtue claim a short delay, Or beauty charm the spectre from his prey— Thou still hadst lived.

BYRON.

In due time Lord Fitz Eustace announced his arrival with his daughter at Mr. Hamilton's, whence he intended immediately to start for the north, and thus follow his letter within a few hours.

On the day Mortimer received this information, he found Ellen much enfeebled, too ill indeed to talk, but still desirous that he and Beatrice should remain with her. They complied, and, after sitting beside her a little while she appeared to doze, and they continued motionless, fearing, by the slightest sound, to arouse her. Sorrowfully did Mortimer contemplate her wasted form, as he listened to her rregular breathing. The exquisitely beautiful ine of feature still marked her countenance, but in nothing else was she like the being he had so ardently admired; and a crowd of mavailing regrets occupied his mind, as he at with his arm resting on a table beside him, his hand shading his eyes, into which the tears tarted, as he almost fancied death had even now made her his own, so much did she look hanged. Beatrice laid her hand gently on his, in token of her participation in his feelings, which he fondly pressed, but did not speak, and his thoughts were almost instantly dispelled by Ellen's soft smile, as she awoke and saw them still with her.

"How good you are," she said, "to watch over me. I am better now, and can talk a little, so I am very glad to find you still here. When I was so ill last night, Mortimer, I regretted I had not told you yesterday that, if you wish it, I will see Lord Fitz Eustace. Is he come yet?"

"No, dearest Ellen, but I expect every our to hear of his arrival. Do you think you an bear the meeting?"

"I would confer all the comfort and pleaare I can, Mortimer, during the moment yet stay with you. Perhaps, too, I should like to see my father, since he is yours also."

- "You shall be gratified, Ellen, I will bring him here myself."
- "Let it then be soon, very soon, for I feel! have not many hours to live—to-morrow even may be dark to me—What, Beatrice, do you weep for me? Nay, love, I need not these tears—I am going to be happy."
- "Do not talk so, Ellen," said Beatrice, bending over her, "you pain us all, and distress yourself."
- "I did not intend to grieve you, dear Beatrice, but you know, as well as I do, my sand is nearly spent—Ah! Mortimer, do not draw down that blind."
- "But the sun shines so strongly upon the room, I thought it would disturb you, Ellen."
- "Ah! no, perhaps I may not see it againstill let me look at its bright light." She then turned to Mrs. Greville, and asked her to fetch her child, which she had not seen that day. When it was brought, she said, "Give her to me—I know she is too heavy for me to hold long, but, for the last time, I must kiss her dear little face. Ah! my poor child! I am going to leave you—but not totally unprotected, I am sure, though the good friend who had promised

to watch over you, as he did over your unfortunate mother—is gone before her—May your fate be more happy than mine! It cannot easily be worse—Dear Mrs. Greville, you answered for this innocent at the font—will you?—but I cannot ask it, I have received so many favours."

"My dearest friend," answered the good lady, taking the infant in her arms. "I will promise what you wish, though you will not ask it. Your babe shall eat of my bread, and drink of my cup, as long as she requires it. Surely, Ellen, you did not doubt my care in this respect?"

"Never, but I know that more than one in this room might wish to perform this act of charity, and I would not have my child looked upon with scorn. Ah! Mortimer, I see you understand me—I am convinced you would take the responsibility on yourself, for my sake, but I have too much regard for you to harbour the wish—no uneasiness, no avoidable stain, shall result to you from my connection—nevertheless, I gratefully thank you."

"But Mrs. Greville may want a coadjutor, Ellen, may I not hold that situation?"

"No, my dear, dear Mortimer, let all your care cease when I am in the grave—I will not



to enhance the happiness yo satisfied that, through you, friends, my last days have t Your individual affection l what a beautiful rainbow is to a frightful thunder storm. comforts the face of nature, the breaks out, and night closes, li with a chastened smile of for the mercies of heaven. felt the blessings of God. an them, but so frail are we that vours are often vain !- Beatri hand, I have one request to 1 timer, too must reply to it." down beside her, and, locking hers, she continued, "I love v you love each other, and I c foolish wish to live to see tl brother, my kind Beatrice?—I would not have you grieve for me—I shall be happy then—May God bless you!" Her voice faltered with her emotion, and her auditors could only press her hand in silence, for the tears streamed down Beatrice's cheeks, while more than one large drop fell from Delmar's eyes, on the thin hand of the sufferer, as he imprinted a long kiss upon it.

"If that assurance will give you any satisfaction, dearest," he said, after a momentary pause, "I will say, for myself, your wish shall be remembered; and, I know, Beatrice will confirm it, though it is not likely, under any circumstances, that the event you mention should take place so early."

Beatrice only bent her head in reply, but the movement was understood. "I thank you both, and feel quite satisfied," returned the invalid with a faint smile, "my work is completed, and I have only to wait my summons from on high, which I feel is close at hand—Pray for me, my dear friends, and, believe me, my last supplications shall be for you." She sunk back, as she pronounced these words, overpowered by the exertion of so long a conversation, during which, her cough had frequently greatly inconvenienced her.

Mrs. Greville, who had retired with the as soon as she was able, in order to be dying friend more at liberty during the view with Mortimer, was hastily recated her care Ellen was consigned, who have a little delay to ascer partial recovery, retraced the road to the

Our hero was immediately apprised. ing home that Lord Fitz Eustace had about half an hour previously, and 1 quently hastened to meet his fathe Beatrice, anxious to avoid so sudden duction to a person for whom she en no small portion of fear, slipped awa He found his lordship with Si room. and Lady Heron, whose reception, ! instantly perceived, had highly grat for he saluted his son with more than suavity: and, for some time, the conflowed on with that ease which is s to those accustomed to mix in good The Baron was a person whose man noted the finished gentleman, and the were equally pleased with the first in made by their visiter. No reference to the object of his journey, for avoided even mentioning the customar of Ellen's state that afternoon, being ot to dispel the pleasing disposition of his ther, before he saw Beatrice, by awakening painful a reflection.

A few minutes before the bell sounded for inner, Miss Heron made her appearance, and, a being presented to her future father-in-law. as completely re-assured by his kindness. You must permit me, my dear Miss Heron, enjoy the privilege of the new duty which ly son intends to impose upon me," he said, s he took her hand, and just touched her ushed cheek with his lips. "I know Mortier will not take it ill that I, for once, taste a leasure he will shortly make his own." Bearice looked timidly at her lover, but the smile satisfaction which played round his mouth alled one into her own countenance, and in a noment the dreaded awkwardness of the meetwas over. She found Lord Fitz Eustace ess haughty than she had expected, and thereore quickly recovered her composure; though fortimer observed that she could not entirely ake off the gloom which the situation of llen had occasioned.

Before returning to the drawing-room after aner, his father drew Mortimer aside, and quired, with apparent anxiety, after the inlid, whom he desired should be informed of

his wish to see her in the morning. To this however, the latter objected, and briefly explained the uncertainty of her existence for a day. The Baron was evidently much surprised, as well as chagrined, by so unexpected a disclosure, and became even more urgent, in consequence, to avoid delay. At length it was proposed by Lady Heron, to whom Mortimer referred the question, that a servant should be immediately dispatched to the village, to apprise Mrs. Greville of Lord Fitz Eustace's being at the castle, requesting her, at the same time, to disclose that fact to Ellen, according as she was able to bear it. This was unanimously agreed to, and in the course of an how the messenger returned, with a note from Ellen's kind friend, written in considerable agitation, to say that she would comply as soon as possible with the desire expressed by Delmar, but at present such a communication was useless, as her dear young friend had been much worse the previous hour or two, so ill, indeed, that she had not been able to attend to anything. She concluded by entreating Mortimer to come early on the following morning, as both herself and Mr. Brownlow apprehended that Ellen had not many hours to live. Prepared as Mortimer was for this intelligence, he was staggered by its official announcement

for such he conceived the doctor's opinion to be. He felt for his father, who had so recently been made aware of her danger, and who, if he really were anxious to have the satisfaction of seeing her, he feared might meet with a disappointment; for, if death were so near, he foresaw the probability that she might ere their visit be no more. In the state Ellen was, however, it was unavailing to attempt an immediate adjournment to the village, for they could not be admitted to see her; and to witness her sad sufferings would only inflict pangs and impotent regret, which he felt certain were already busy in the mind of Lord Fitz Eustace, or the proud noble would never have so far allowed his error as to conceive the idea of Partially repairing it.

These thoughts passed quickly through Mortimer's mind, as he held the billet in his land an instant, before he spoke. The change which was visible in his countenance, antounced to his companions that something in the note disturbed him, and each, as their fears dictated, augured its contents. Lord Fitz Eustace attributed it to a positive refusal on Ellen's part to admit him, while the Herons approached nearer the truth, in supposing increased illness was the cause. Their suspense did not last long, for, on handing the little

epistle to his father, he turned to his expecting friends and told them its contents. All were distressed, but concurred in his determination of waiting the next day before intruding upon Mrs. Greville again, since no advantage could be gained by any precipitate measure; and, after canvassing the sorrowful subject a short time, the party separated early, each feeling unequal to sustain a cheerfulness they did not feel.

Beatrice's urgent wish, to accompany her lover in the morning to Mrs. Greville's, he strongly opposed, for he knew how deeply she would be affected; and, after some hesitation, she consented to give up the satisfaction of seeing her friend again, unless she should be demanded by the sufferer. "In that case, Mortimer," she said, as he was about to precede Lord Fitz Eustace by half an hour, in order to prepare for his reception, "in that case, I depend upon your sending to me. Do not hesitate—I will not allow myself to be overcome."

"Rely upon me, dearest," replied Delmar,
"I well know your firmness, and deeply thank
you for all you have already shewn." Having
received Beatrice's compliance with his wish,
he lost no time in mounting his horse, which
soon bore him on his way.

CHAPTER XVI.

Some moments, ay, one treacherous hour, He still might doubt the tyrant's power; So fair, so calm, so softly seal'd, The first, last look by death reveal'd.

BYRON.

How lov'd, how honour'd once, avails thee not,
To whom related, or by whom begot;
A heap of dust alone remains of thee,
"Tis all thou art, and all the proud shall be!
FOFE.

our hero approached Mrs. Greville's, his were fearfully raised to the windows, in ectation of seeing them closed. It was not sure, exactly, which pervaded his breast is perceived his fears had overstepped the ity, for he was convinced that, for Ellen's sake, it would have been happy if life had ed; neither was it sorrow, for he wished more to see the being he had so fondly i, before animation had fled for ever!

But it was a feeling between the two, which knew what was best, and yet could not entirely divest itself of the wish to retain the object of its affection. He hoped his father's wish might yet be gratified, and consequently he hastened to assure himself of that probability.

Mrs. Greville told him that, in the course of the night, Ellen had been extremely restless, and had mentioned his name, as also that of her little girl; but now for some time she had slept, or appeared to sleep, and at intervals was so perfectly quiescent that her attendants almost fancied her sorrows were at a end. Lord Fitz Eustace's coming was therefore unnecessary and useless; nevertheless, Mortimer could not now prevent it, and, after having stood awhile beside the dying woman, who took no notice of his presence, he returned towards the castle, with the intention of advising his father to relinquish his purpose. This he could not accomplish, for his lordship was perfectly resolute, and the father and sea entered the house together. The baron was strongly, though silently, affected on being is troduced, according to his desire, into Elec's chamber; the sight of the being who recalled many subjects of remorse and humiliatic seemed to shake his very soul, but he struggle for composure, and, for sometime, he and Mortimer anxiously waited in expectation of a lucid interval, in vain.

At length, her eyes were unclosed, and, breathing heavily, she looked earnestly upon her visiters.

"My father, Ellen," said Mortimer, in a low tone, "your father is come to you."

Lord Fitz Eustace took her cold hand, and, with a look of deep concern, repeated, "Your contrite father, Ellen:" her glassy eye instantly lighted up, and a gentle smile brightened her features, as her fingers, already rigid with the near approach of death, strove to return the pressure. Her pale lips moved in the attempt to express her feelings, but articulation failed her; and, after gazing earnestly on the parent she now saw for the first and last time, she fixed her eves upon her beloved Mortimer, and then raised them to Heaven as if in the act of prayer. Again she made an ineffectual efort to speak, smiled faintly as her lids closed, and then, with a sigh so soft that those nearest could scarcely hear it, she resigned her spirit into the hands of Him who gave it.

It was not until the expiration of a short time, that her friends could believe that she had departed, for she looked so calm, so happy,

that it appeared as if she had merely sunk into a refreshing sleep. Mortimer listened in breathless eagerness for a repetition of that sigh, but in vain—it came not—all was still!

"It once was Ellen that he looked upon," but now she had passed away for ever!

Without a word, the young man turned, and drew his apparently unconscious father from the bed of death. The events of the following week require no detail, they were such as necessarily succeed the circumstance above narrated, and with which all are too intimately acquainted not to desire silence on that head.

The now beatified Ellen was wept and lamented as a friend, and as the victim of crime; but all who loved her felt that it was selish to deplore her loss, for, being fully prepared to meet her Maker, she was most likely in the enjoyment of that happiness which she had not found upon earth!

Lord Fitz Eustace, with Mortimer, and Sin George Heron, followed her remains to be final resting-place in the church-yard of Claim brook, where the tears and the regrets of the affectionate villagers were called forth, in Limanner as their blessings had been two shows years before, when, arrayed in all the loveline of youth and beauty, she had sold herself

treachery. Many an aged peasant, stumbling on the borders of eternity, who had looked forward to his last moments being eased by her kind attention, mourned over her untimely fate, while the youthful deplored her as the model of their lives, and all felt bereaved of a common friend.

The old and faithful Margaret, who had fostered the childhood of her beloved young mistress, and participated in the joys and sorrows of her short life, perhaps felt the blow of her death more keenly than any one; for, having lived so long in Mr. Vernon's family, every tie had been forgotten, and she felt as if she had lost her only friend—her only attraction upon earth! It is true, Ellen's child was a call upon her shattered love, and, for a time, she watched over it with a mother's care, but she never again held up her head, and, ere long, she was laid near the being she loved even unto death!

Almost all the inhabitants of the hamlet were present at the solemn ceremony which was to close the earthly scene of the young, and unhappy Ellen; for each desired to see the last of their kind benefactress; and the respectful silence, the deep drawn sigh, or suppressed sob, told how truly her memory was

cherished. Delmar saw that the village flow would long live in the hearts of those who, like herself, were simple-minded, and uncontamnated by a communion with the world.

Happy! thrice happy, she who leaves the lasting impression of her worth on the minconf the purer portion of the little society which her course has run!

After the sad solemnity, Mortimer again repaired to Mrs. Greville's, to take his leave her and her young charge, who was amp I provided for by Hamilton's will; for, as he head declared, all his own property had been bequeathed to its ill-fated mother, in reversion to her child, and the will being found, upon inspection, perfectly orthodox, no difficulty was to be anticipated in her future support. That visit was his last, as, on the succeeding morning. he was to set off with his father for Merton Hall, whence, accompanied by Mrs. Hamilton, they were to proceed, at the end of a month, to join the Herons in Hertfordshire, where preparations were immediately to be made for his nuptials. Having thus fulfilled every duty incumbent upon him, he returned to the castle to devote the transitory period of his stay to his beloved Beatrice.

CHAPTER XVII.

O happy they! the happiest of their kind!
Whom gentler stars unite, and in one fate
Their hearts, their fortunes, and their beings blend.
Tis not the coarser tie of human laws,
Unnatural oft and foreign to the mind,
That binds their peace, but harmony itself,
Attuning all their passions into love:
Where friendship full exerts her softest power,
Perfect esteem, enliven'd by desire
Ineffable, and sympathy of soul.

THOMSON.

Stategice's gentle, unaffected manners, sweetess of temper, and marked attention imself, had made a complete convert ord Fitz Eustace, whose feelings, still smaring from the recent shock of wounded pridiere fortunately more accessible to sterling worth. He owned to himself that Mortim had chosen well, though that opinion we still unacknowledged to those around him and he now vainly wished Maria's feelings he

been similarly consulted. In short, remore had been silently undermining the monume of his pride many weeks, and the reflections created by the past week's events he completed its overthrow; and Beatrice a Delmar felt that his behaviour proclaim his prejudices against her, if such ever disted, were now no more, which was a firmed that evening, by his lordship's of avowal of satisfaction at the prospect Beatrice's becoming a part of his family. I circumstance which called forth this declar tion was a trifling chance, but how often we not see the greatest results derived for the most insignificant occurrences!

The evening was one of great beauty, fort day had been warm, and the mild air of ear May wasted a persume from every adjact field and garden; and, notwithstanding to sun had sunk below the horizon, a bright glastill remained on all around. Beatrice to day had not quitted the house, and Mortin lest the dining-room directly she and Laster Heron had retired, in hopes of persuading to take a walk. A quarter of an hour pass and, as he did not return, on Sir George be called away to speak to some person on a cultural business, Lord Fitz Eustace walk

out upon the terrace, whence the windows of Lady Heron's boudoir were visible. The terrace was partly shaded by trees on the side nearest the mansion, which prevented his being easily seen, and, as the baron walked slowly along between the spreading branches, he could perceive that a happy group was stationed at the open sash, apparently engaged in conversation. He stopped, and, himself unobserved for a few minutes, contemplated their happy countenances with inward satisfaction.

The tall, elegant Mortimer was partly sitting, partly leaning on the window sill, while his head was bent towards Beatrice, who was standing beside him. Her shoulder almost touched his, her hand placed upon his arm was half held in his; and, though Lord Fitz Eustace was not near enough to note their besolute looks, the light which fell upon their aces was sufficient to convince him that right smiles reigned on each lip, that affecton flashed in each eye, and that their contrastion was of that tender stamp which is the consequence, the delight, of true love.

Lady Heron also seemed to participate in teir pleasure, for she stood by her daughter ith her face turned towards the lovers.

"And I have wished to forbid such happiness as those two young creatures are now partaking!" thought Lord Fitz Eustace. "I have been tempted by the desire of seeing my boy united to one of the highest in the land, to crush his warm and noble heart, for I believe his upright principles would have prevented his marrying against my will. Thank heaven! my children are dutiful. though I would I were able to trace their conduct to love, rather than to propriety. My poor Maria has already fallen a victim to her implicit obedience, and I will not add another name to the list of evils I have brought about. No! Mortimer shall have my unqualified approbation in this affair, for I must see my son, at least, happy,"

The baron remained stationary until the party receded from the window, which they did almost immediately, when Sir George Heron joined him, saying, as he did so, "I find my mother and sister are not inclined to come out to-night, my lord, but, if you please, that need not prevent our taking advantage of the lovely weather."

Accordingly, they strolled for an hoar through the shrubbery, but the young baronet found his companion thoughtful and tacitum,

and, consequently, was not sorry when their walk was concluded. On entering the drawing-room, they found Lady Heron presiding at the tea-table, while Mortimer and Beatrice were standing in the veranda. Lord Fitz Eustace stepped out also, but so earnest was their conversation that he was unnoticed, until, placing one hand on his son's shoulder, at the same time holding out the other to Beatrice, he said, "I am almost unwilling to interrupt the happiness you enjoy in each other's society, my dear children, by carrying Mortimer away to-morrow. Say, may I hope, Beatrice, that you will forgive me for being so unkind?"

"Most willingly, my lord," replied she miling, "indeed no apology or regret is due non you, since I am sure Mortimer feels the ain of a temporary separation cancelled by the pleasure of affording you any gratification."

"Doubtless your own sentiments are conyed in that opinion?" said he, in an interrotory tone, "and I thank you for them."

"That I am sure they are, my dear father. eatrice's ideas are far superior to mine in 'ery thing, for where I might repine she ways submits with cheerfulness, and endea-

vours to convert me; but I fear I am very much more selfish than herself."

"Oh! indeed, Mortimer, you do yourself injustice, you never think of your own happiness when that of another is concerned. Will not your lordship agree with me!"

"I will agree with you both, my der Beatrice, in believing that each is worthy of the other, and that each is fondly loved. Ah! do not let me call that rebellious blush into your cheek, but let me say that it is my firm persuasion that, in conferring this hand on Mortimer, you will convey an almost equally precious gift on myself, for I feel well assured I shall gain a kind and affectionate daughter. Indeed, I am convinced Mortimer has chosen equally for his own, and for his friends', happiness."

Lord Fitz Eustace placed her hand in that of his son while he spoke, and Delmar mid, "I cannot express my gratitude, my deal father, for this avowal; believe me, we are believe me, we are believe only cloud which overshadowed us, your generous approval."

"My end is then answered, my son, I withto contribute my mite towards your felicity.

I have so long heard and seen nothing but the

grief I have occasioned, that it is quite a relief to find myself furnishing pleasure to any of those I love."

The eyes of Beatrice swam in tears, but the baron obviated any reply by re-entering the room, whither the happy lovers followed him, and the evening wore away in increased enjoyment.

The next morning Mortimer and his father left the scene of so much joy and sorrow; and, after a few weeks, accompanied by Mrs. Hamilton, reached Hertfordshire. The latter soon became an universal favourite at the sall, her disposition assimilated perfectly with hat of Beatrice, and, during her visit, her sealth and spirits rapidly improved. The appiness of her brother was a balm to her sounded heart, and, in the two months which receded his nuptials, cheerfulness was again stored to her mind.

That period was fully occupied by our hero various necessary arrangements, sometimes London, and sometimes in the more delight-society of her he loved, at the Hall. The y at length approached that he was to call atrice his own, and those few friends who are to be present at the ceremony arrived.



ing mem ronger to remain was unable to curb his taste f debts were still numerous, a mains of his funded property estate, had been sacrificed. his wife's fortune was all the upon, since, most fortunatel had been settled on herself an necessity of banishment from his favourite pursuits, together ous vexations and privations l had entailed on himself and increased the moroseness of the unhappy Mary cast man regret over the past. Though had not forsaken her, her late failed to make their impressi tive mind, and her friends dete symptoms of lurking sorrow, manner. She deeply lamente young companions, and, having always entertained a horror of a family, was constantly irritated when he saw them.

"If I could only persuade Sir Harry to take George," said Lady Dinely to her aunt, one day, as they were discussing the subject, "and leave baby with you, I think then I should be happy. But to give up both to his mother, who I really cannot bear, is too hard. if we were going only to France, I would not are so much, but America is so very far-and he talks of staying there for years. Alas! my dearest aunt, how often I have thought of my behaviour to my kind cousin, since I acted so contrary to your advice. But it is useless to think about that now," she continued, with a forced laugh, "or to trouble you with my complaints. I must make the best of my bargain. Perhaps Harry will change again, when this cloud has blown over."

Though the young wife affected indifference in the anticipated departure of herself and instand, Lady Heron felt she was greatly hagrined at it; and, in consequence, taking ivantage of a favourable opportunity, she impressed to Sir Harry her hope that he would atify his wife, by permitting their eldest boy



ner in which he announced purpose to Mary. Her gratiti notwithstanding, was extreme Lady Heron flattered herself she had softened Mary's car could not remove them; and her, a few days after, with less would have done had she know going to a far distant land w consolation.

On the appointed morning, the the enraptured Delmar received bride from Sir George Heron the affection of a brother, and a bestowed the valuable gift of Beatrice upon one who, he will long possessed her love.

The young couple returned an hour, in order that Beatrice

and Sir George, who stood upon the steps of the house, drew down the blinds, and set off at full gallop towards London.

"Well, George," said Lady Dinely (who, with the rest of the party, had watched the departure from the window), as her cousin remetered, "they are gone in excellent style. I love a dash! By the bye, when do you intend to give us the pleasure of tasting your wedding cake? As Sir Harry means positively to embark next week, I fear there is no chance of my coming in for a share. However, I will drink your health, wherever I am, if you let me know when there is to be a young Lady Heron!"

"All in good time, Mary, I have no wish to dispossess my good mother of her seat at the head of my table, for I have never yet found a lady fit to supersede her, or worthy of being her daughter."

"That is as bad a compliment to our sex in general, George, as it may be gratifying to my aunt. The young ladies are greatly obliged to you."

"So they ought to be," returned the baronet, and aghing; "for my indulging the hope of ceeding in meeting with her equal."

"'I assure you, Lady Dinely," said Lady

Heron, "I shall be as anxious to resign post as you are for the consequent festiwhen George thinks his happiness wil augmented by matrimony."

"When my mother is reflected, then, I remember, Gunter shall have orders to for a cake to America, expressly for you, plenty of white ribbon."

"Nay, then, I think the sooner su generous promise is fulfilled the better shall expect the first accounts will report gress, now both Beatrice and your frien off your hands."

The departure of some of the party rel Sir George from her badinage; and, is course of a few weeks, many a weary m water rolled between two people who is have known much happiness together, they not rejected its cultivation.

CHAPTER XVIII.

They name thee before me, A knell to mine ear; A shudder comes o'er me—Why wert thou so dear? They know not I knew thee Who knew thee too well:—Long, long shall I rue thee, Too deeply to tell.

BYRON.

s during the Carnival of 182-, and some is subsequent to the events recorded in st chapter, that Lord Fitz Eustace and Hamilton entered Naples, where they is a short time to be rejoined by Mr. and Delmar, who were making an excursion is north of Italy, while their relatives ed the road to the south, for the benefit Lordship's health, which had been in a rious state some time. A severe fall out hunting before he left Ireland, and ich little notice had been taken, was the

original cause of his indisposition, to which the circumstances of the last twelvemonths had He was not. not failed to contribute much. however, considered by his friends in any danger, and was attended by his children with tender solicitude, from place to place, as his fancy dictated. In Mrs. Hamilton he had a valuable companion, for she possessed every quality to soothe and comfort his mind, at the same time that she administered to the wants of his body. With the numerous noble qualities of his son he was already acquainted, for he had felt more affection-or rather, perhaps. more pride, for him than any one else, but Beatrice daily made advances in his favour, and endeared herself to every one.

Whilst alone with her father, Mrs. Hamilton scarcely left his side, and, as he did not join at all in the amusements of the season, she was seldom in public. With her brother, indeed, she was sometimes seen abroad, but when she first reached Naples he was absent, and, consequently, she was secluded. A few friends visited the Baron, who knew of his arrival, but he did not court society, for his malady being partly on the nerves, much company annoyed him.

On the second day of their sojourn, after

rs. Hamilton was startled, on entering the otel, by seeing Mrs. Sinclair, who, with anher lady and gentleman, were on the stairs. It an instant, she felt inclined to avoid her, It the past was most vividly and painfully called to her mind; but a single glance told It that retreat was impossible, as she was ready recognised, and, with eager warmth, It friend came forward to meet her.

"To what fortunate circumstance am I to tribute the pleasure of seeing you here, my tar Mrs. Sinclair?" she said, after the first thatations were over, and she had introduced to father. "I can scarcely believe my own jes!"

The good lady answered with a smile. Health has been our principal object in this ag journey, for the humidity of Ireland as very deleterious to Frederic, as well as yself, and we were advised to change the one. A southern climate was recommended, d, though Frederic was quite averse to move first, he would not hear of my giving up the an of our medical friend. You know, my ar Mrs. Hamilton, if he have a fault in my res, it is that of being too fond of his mother; id, therefore, he went upon half pay on pur-

pose, as he kindly says, to devote his time to me. Ah! how delighted he will be to seeyou!"

Maria felt that the blood forsook her cheek, as the partial parent spoke of her son; and, anxious to conceal the trepidation she was under, she hastily informed Mrs. Sinclair that Lord Fitz Eustace was living at that hotel, and that, if she were disengaged, she should be happy to conduct her to their apartments. Mrs. Sinclair, however, excused herself on the ground of not being able to leave her friends, with whom she was lionising. "I will, however, avail myself of your kind invitation tomorrow," she said, "and, I doubt not, Frederic will be as desirous as myself to enjoy a chat with you. Apropos, have you heard that he is now a major?"

Maria replied in the negative, and her friend rejoined, "Ah! well, we shall have much to say to-morrow morning, for I intend to be with you quite early, so adieu, for the present."

During the rest of the day, Mrs. Hamilton was unusually depressed in spirits, for her interview with Mrs. Sinclair had raised up many thoughts, and re-opened many wounds, time and reason had soothed, and she dreaded lest Frederic should yield to his mother's solicitations, to attend her on her projected visit.

More than once in the course of the evening, Lord Fitz Eustace noticed her abstraction, and inquiring if she were unwell, proposed sending or advice. She assured him his fears were intirely groundless, and, to prove to him he was mistaken, sat down to their usual game of Ecarté. But still she could not fix her mind to it, she lost every thing, and at length her father, tired of combatting so insignificant an adversary, gave up the unequal contest, remarking, more kindly than she expected, "that as she did not seem disposed for cards, and he was tired with his walk, they would give up their customary amusement."

Although so greatly discomposed, before the time for Mrs. Sinclair's visit, Maria had prepared her mind to meet the only man she had ever loved, should he present himself before her; and to sustain that firmness, in word and deed, which had always so strongly characterised her. She had no occasion to be under any apprehension, for Sinclair was equally, if not more, fearful of the re-introduction than herself, and would not willingly have subjected either to the awkwardness his visit might produce. His mother knew nothing of his former attachment, and, supposing Frederic had ever looked upon Maria with the pure eye of friend-

ship, as she did herself, he no sooner returned home that evening than she accosted him by saying, "Well, my dear Frederic, who do you think I have seen to-day? A great favourite of yours, I can assure you."

The young man mentioned the names of several persons, which, like all so called upon, were the most unlikely to be right, and Mr. Sinclair silently dissented. "No, no, Frederic, it was a lady, and you have guessed only men. Moreover, I have half engaged for you to go and call upon her with me to-morrow."

- "A lady!" repeated the major, "and one of course I know well, as you have made this engagement. No foreigner, I hope, for I hats their levèes."
- "I know you do, and therefore would not impose such a trial upon you, Fred," returned his mother, smiling. "Come, I fancy I must tell you—It was Mrs. Hamilton."
- "Maria!" said Sinclair, quickly, while a bright glow was visible on his cheek, "thenk must really have been her I saw yesterday."
- "Likely enough, my dear, but you did ist mention having done so."
- "I was not sure, Mother, I only passed some distance, and observed a person like be walking with an elderly man."

1

"Lord Fitz Eustace, to be sure," rejoined his mother, "why did you not speak to her?"

"Oh! I was anxious to get home to you, besides I hardly knew if I were right, she is so changed." He sighed, as he turned to the window, and Mrs. Sinclair said,

"She does look ill, but I found her as kind as ever, his lordship also quite pleasant; but, you must go and discover all this for yourself, lam sure she will be happy to see you."

"I cannot, mother," he replied, abruptly, "lam engaged."

"I can go any time in the course of the morning, Frederic, that you like, and will wait for you."

"It is useless, mother, I shall not be home until dinner time—but, tell me," he continued, after a short pause "how poor Maria seems?"

Mrs. Sinclair detailed the substance of their short interview, together with the account of Mrs. Hamilton's appearance, to which her son listened with deep attention, proving the interest he felt. No persuasions, however, were Powerful enough to induce him to go with her in the morning, for our gallant soldier knew that he yet loved, though he dared not think low hopeless his affection was, after all that

had happened. The possibility of encountering her had been one of his reasons for wishing to stay in his native country, for he feared himself, should fate again throw them together. But his mother's indisposition gave him much uneasiness, and determined him on sacrificing his own feelings entirely for her sake. "How I should condemn myself," thought he, "if, by listening to my own fancies, I should entail pain, or perhaps death on my best friend,-my mother! whose every hope and wish has been for me! Surely she demands this concession, and undoubtedly she shall have it !" In consequence, he accompanied her on her tour, congratulating himself from time to time on his good fortune in still keeping clear of any part of Lord Fitz Eustace's family. On several occasions he had heard the name he almost dreaded, for in many places the Delmars had preceded him, but it was not until he reached Naples that he knew positively that they inhabited the same town.

Mrs. Sinclair expressed much astonishment at his refusal to attend her to Mrs. Hamilton's, but, as he pleaded business in extenuation of his conduct, she consented to dispense with his company, and entered Mrs. Hamilton's room alone, certainly somewhat to the satisfaction

t lady, notwithstanding her resolution to e Frederic without formality. The two spent a long morning together in the ment of friendly conversation, so grar to those who have long been separated. Hamilton, indeed, had ever felt more atent for Mrs. Sinclair than was demanded quaintanceship alone, and it may be supwith what pleasure, though at the same that pain, she spoke to her of the blow ed received. She did not enter into any ulars, for she was neither able nor willing rrate the humiliating tale, and her friend ing, from experience, the bitter pang of : a husband in the full vigour of youth lealth, rather endeavoured to draw her herself, leading her to speak of her ev. her father, or, in short, any less disng subject; for Mrs. Sinclair had heard th of the affair, although it had carefully hushed up, to make sure it was better for Hamilton, as well as all her friends, that uld sink into oblivion as soon as possible. a learnt that the Sinclairs had taken lodgin a neighbouring street for some time, many minutes walk from the hotel she pied; and, consequently, she must make er mind to see Frederic constantly, since it was improbable, during his mother's frequentiate, that they could long avoid collision

and circumstances had made Illness more nervous, for time had been when Hamilton would have been able instant shake off the feelings she now experie and which it required some exertion to: The fact alone of Frederic's having bet lected, by her cruel husband, to work her was enough to agitate her in the antici meeting, without recollecting also that sh partly fallen into the snare, and that Si with herself had heard his supposed co openly declared. The fear of coming in a with him would have confined her to the had not her father required her company walks, during one of which, two or three after, they met the object of her avoidance his 'mother. Both were distant, and pe both felt uneasy, but the ceremony of ducing the major to Lord Fitz Eustace, Mrs. Sinclair was eager to perform, m diversion in their favour, allowing then for collecting their forces, as our soldier have said.

This momentary respite was a we one, for the Baron, unconscious of the p inflicted, 'proposed that they should co

their ramble together, to which neither Maria nor Sinclair thought it possible to offer any objection, as Mrs. Sinclair willingly consented, not supposing her son or Mrs. Hamilton could have any objection to each other's society. She remarked, indeed, their cool behaviour, but not comprehending it, she took no notice, and accepting Lord Fitz Eustace's proffered arm, left her son to escort Maria.

The major was not one likely to increase Mrs. Hamilton's pain, he was endowed with elf-command, and accustomed to mix too ouch in general society, besides his wish to elieve her from discomfort, not to conceal his measiness. Assuming, therefore, the office ssigned him without the slightest hesitation, efreely entered into conversation on the numerless attractive objects around. As he spoke, laria felt grateful for the noble manner in rhich he had conducted himself; for the easy ad graceful, yet lofty tone he maintained, enirely removed every trace of her discompoare. The hour they remained together was aything but irksome, though it had not been ne of unrestraint, and Mrs. Hamilton heard er father express his hope, to Major Sinclair, 1 soon becoming better acquainted with him, vith less displeasure than she might have done

grarie hand even cold, when was neglicitly the case in the feas Lord Fitz Eustace took a Frederic, and in the absence constantly invited him to walk partake some amusement, with did Sinclair endeavour to escal kindness, for he thought his premaria, but occasionally with his mother generally marred I he feared her penetration, if shunning the family was too m

Mrs. Sinclair had several to cause of his altered manner friend, but without effect, for evaded the question, though him to accept Lord Fitz Eustactor fear of importunity.

CHAPTER XIX.

For thee I panted, thee I priz'd,
For thee I gladly sacrific'd
Whate'er I lov'd before;
And shall I see thee start away,
And, helpless, hopeless, hear thee say—
Farewell! we meet no more!

COWPER.

Mr. and Mrs. Delmar at length arrived, bringing with them an increase of happiness to their beloved relatives. Mortimer was sorry to find that the climate had not materially improved his father's health, though he appeared perfectly pleased with the situation he was in.

"I find several people I know, here, Mortimer," said his lordship, "more indeed, who are disposed to be attentive than I care to encourage, for I soon get tired of them, and Myself also. I have, however, become acquainted with a very pleasant young man,

who, I am sure, you will like. His mother, too, has long been a friend of Maria's, I find, so that we see a great deal of them. Their name is Sinclair; but I do not yet know whether they be related to the Caithness family."

- "Sinclair," repeated Delmar, thrown off his guard by surprise, and suddenly looking at his sister, who changed colour.
- "Yes, do you know anything of him? Is he a friend of yours?"
- "Oh! no, my Lord," he said, recollecting himself; "I have no acquaintance with any one of that name, but I am glad you have met with agreeable people, as I feared you had remained much alone, from your letters. I intend to resume my office of guide immediately, and show you all the wonders of this gay city, as I have had the advantage of exploring them all before."

To this proposal all were willing to agree, but Mortimer found, on enquiry, that Major Sinclair had already attended his father and sister, to many of the most celebrated spots in the neighbourhood.

"You will see the major to-morrow, Mortimer," said his father, "for he and his mother are going with us to Pompeii."

This information did not appear to please our hero, who felt completely puzzled by so extraordinary a coincidence as that of his lordship's high commendation of a person, he himself had fancied any thing but agreeable. He recollected, however, that Sinclair was not an uncommon name, and that this gentleman might have no affinity with Hamilton's dupe. He could not suppose that his sister would even see that man upon sufferance. jet, her countenance impressed him with the belief that he was the same. Perplexed, and ill at ease, he watched for an opportunity of peaking to Maria alone, and of settling his doubts. This he found no opportunity of doing that evening; but the following day, before the party assembled to go to the ruins, he ascertained from herself that his suspicions were correct, though he could not persuade her to allow him to inform Lord Fitz Eustace of the unconscious penalty he was imposing upon her. That day's excursion, she declared, could not be avoided; besides, both Frederic and his nother were to dine with them, and, conseluently, they must meet. She was unwilling, uso, that her father should know anything of he affair: as any reference to Hamilton disurbed him greatly.

one, who had disputed with her for her possession, when yet she l give. "As her father had arran riage without consulting her," tho "might she not have loved this n It certainly was not improbable solved not to recur to the sub had been with her long enough her sentiments.

The day accordingly was spen and the brother observed, with distance and reserve maintain Maria and the major. If they was with studied coldness, if Si her any attention, it was rather pearance of respect than please Mortimer saw him frequently fix her, as he thought, unobserved, denly remove them, as if ang.

to any positive conclusion, he let some days slip by in silence, during which he constantly met Sinclair at his father's, and elsewhere. All he saw of him he liked, for he found him pleasant and gentlemanly; and he recollected the high testimony of his worth given by Hamilton in his last moments. He soon felt persuaded that some unexplained circumstances between Maria and Sinclair had occasioned their extraordinary conduct, for which he hoped an opportunity would shortly offer itself of removing.

In consequence of these observations, Delmar acknowledged to Lord Fitz Eustace, when the question was put, that he was not surprised at the opinion formed by his Lordship, of his new acquaintance, since he was really person likely to please everywhere. When Pon the subject, Mortimer ventured to hint and Maria's apparent aversion to him, and ord Fitz Eustace declared, with some suriese, his entire ignorance of such being the se. On the contrary, he told his son he had an incasing interest in Maria, which, he flattered meelf he was fostering by throwing them gether.

"But if you think, Mortimer," he continued,

"that I have been mistaken, and that Maris annoyed by Sinclair, I will break off acquaintance, for I will never put her in the way of any man she does not like, again." He spoke in a tone of bitter feeling, and Mortimer, unwilling to mention the whole affair, without his sister's permission, said, "Perhaps if you were to speak to her, my Lord, she might disclose the reason of the restraint they each maintain."

"I will do so, Mortimer, but I own I am very sorry she dislikes our new friend, for I have rarely met any one I have found more pleasant."

Accordingly, the baron interrogated Mr. Hamilton on the subject, and desired her, with the kindest solicitude, to tell him if she had any reason to be displeased with the society of Sinclair. "Your brother, my dear Maria," he said, "who is ever so jealous of your had piness, fancies you are uneasy, and if such the truth, you have only to inform me, and will instantly do all you wish."

The colour went and came in her cheek, she replied, "I owe you many thanks, my defather, for your kindness, but you must excus my entering into the detail of the reason my behaviour to major Sinclair; it has re-

erence to circumstances I am quite unequal to re-consider. Mortimer, however, being acquainted with the principal one, is quite as capable as myself of giving you the information you require, and I give him perfect liberty to do so. I will also request him to act as you and he think advisable. If, my lord, you should feel any surprise at not having earlier known the facts he will relate, you must attribute my silence to the wish of sparing you pain."

Having failed to extract any elucidation from his daughter, Lord Fitz Eustace returned to Mortimer, who now, with Mrs. Hamilton's sanction, related that part of Hamilton's confession which regarded his project against Frederic, not omitting to mention his complete exculpation by the dying man. "I see Maria cannot overcome the shock her feelings have sustained," added Mortimer, "and I hope, my dear father, you will remove quickly to inother part of the country for her sake."

"Indeed, I will," returned his lordship, and had I been aware of all this before, she old never have been subjected to this discess. Not that I think her quite justified being so severe, but there is no accounting for feelings, and since she is so deeply

hurt, we will make preparations for The baron continued to conve some time upon the subject, bitterly l ing his own conduct throughout, and g for Mrs. Hamilton, who, Delmar co with him in believing, had been the of Sinclair's affection before her ma "Alas!" thought her self-accusing had I not been blinded by a foolish for the attainment of consideration might now be the happy wife of an es man, who I can now admire. look back? I cannot recal the deeds committed, the past is all a drea future uncertainty, while the presen is in our power! I will endeavour to it in contributing to the happiness children."

It was speedily arranged that Mimilton, with her father, should procenext morning but one, on their is Sicily, and that Mortimer and Beatric having remained in Naples sufficient satisfy their curiosity, should rejoin to Palermo.

When Maria was apprised of this she consented, without hesitation, the brother observed she appeared consists.

agitated. He therefore again pressed her to say if she had the slightest objection to the course about to be adopted, to which she replied in the negative; and, as she seemed anxious to escape farther discussion, little more was said. Lord Fitz Eustace, desirous of sparing her any unnecessary disquietude, now he was sensible of her uncomfortable position, himself called upon Major Sinclair in the morning, in order that, by announcing his departure, Maria might not have any chance of seeing him again. He thought, by taking leave of Frederic at his own apartments, every excuse for Sinclair to visit him again would be obviated.

Considerable surprise was manifested by Mrs. Sinclair at so sudden a resolution, and she would immediately have gone to her friend, had not a look from her son stopped her. He was at no loss to account for the removal, he only wondered at its not having taken place long before; and he plainly comprehended that Mortimer had been the instigator of this journey. That it was the best thing which could be adopted for all parties he was convinced, though he endured thrill of intense agony when Lord Fitz Bustace mentioned the purport of his visit.

During the short time his Lordship remains the major preserved his usual composure, I the door had scarcely closed after the ban when he started up, and walked quickly and fro.

In vain his mother spoke to him, inquire why she was not to go to Mrs. Hamilton; vain she entreated him to tell her what at him, for every trace of colour had left cheek; he appeared equally deaf and bli as he passed her unnoticed.

"My dearest Frederic," she said, affection ately taking hold of his arm, "pray tell what is the matter?"

He seemed in a degree to recover hims when he felt her hand, and, after looking her a moment, "Mother," he replied, "not ask. I cannot tell you now. Perhs some other time you may know how hard have struggled to do my duty." After moment's thought, he resumed: "You me not go to Mrs. Hamilton, she is leave Naples to avoid me." His bitter tone so prised and grieved his fond parent, whether the could not exactly comprehend it cause, now for the first time began to perceit that some mystery hung over Frederic as Maria, from which had originated the could not exactly comprehend it is some mystery hung over Frederic as Maria, from which had originated the

duct she had so often, yet so uselessly, sought to penetrate. Her eyes filled with tears as she quitted her hold, saying, "You know Frederic, I have every confidence in you, and since you request this, it shall be done without a comment; but can I not, at least, write to Maria? I may never see her again."

Sinclair sighed heavily, and, without replying, leaned against the window in deep abstraction. Seeing him in so incomprehensible a state, Mrs. Sinclair forebore farther importunity, and for some moments anxiously watched his changing countenance. At length he appeared more calm, and, observing she was looking distressed, he said, as he kissed her, "I shall go out, mother, for I am sure I an neither doing you nor myself any good here. I dare say I shall be home by dinner time, but if not, do not wait." He took his hat, and departed without opposition, for Mrs. Sinclair was unwilling to add to his discom-Posure by any farther questions; but, as the weary hours crept on, her maternal fears augmented for his safety, and numberless were he conjectures she formed, and the reasons he assigned for his agitation, ere her idolised on returned.

CHAPTER XX.

His words are bonds, his oaths are oracles, His love sincere, his thoughts immaculate, His tears, pure messengers from his heart, His heart as far from fraud as heaven from earth.

SHAKSPIARI.

ALTHOUGH our friend Frederic had so keely felt the reserve of Mrs. Hamilton, during the period of his forced visits; and although the had endeavoured by every means in his power to avoid temptation, he felt the most alarming regret on hearing it was the intention of Lad Fitz Eustace to proceed on his journey. At that moment, he became conscious of the secret pleasure he had unwittingly received from being with her, although he had constantly been reminded, by her manner, the harsh opinion she had every reason entertain of him. He was absolutely the field at his sensations, and most bitterly the secret pleasure he had every reason entertain of him. He was absolutely the field at his sensations, and most bitterly the secret pleasure he had every reason entertain of him. He was absolutely the field at his sensations, and most bitterly the secret pleasure he had every reason entertain of him.

repent his false security. He discovered at he had overrated his strength, in supsing he could so constantly see unmoved, se he had so fervently loved; for, notwithanding her conduct, and his own assumed difference, he found that his affection had stally increased. To part from her was a everer pang than he had anticipated, but hat was a trifle, in comparison to the idea of her quitting the city, in consequence of the false impression she had imbibed, and the misconstruction of his actions. could only convince her, by the most complete and candid explanation, of the erroneous judgment she had formed of him, he believed he should be happy, or at least contented; and without which he felt he never could be so. These were the tumultuous thoughts which occupied his mind on the departure f Lord Fitz Eustace, thoughts which made im insensible to the voice of parental tenerness, and which racked his soul to its erv centre. He could not endure to witess his mother's uneasiness, and yet be onstrained to hide the cause from her. lough, as her participation was useless, he as averse to give her pain by the commuication. Therefore he left her as we have already said, and during the solitary walk be indulged for several hours after, he succeeded in recovering the composure necessary for putting in practice the resolution he then formed.

With feelings of renewed hope, in consequence of his reflections, he traced his way towards the hotel where Lord Fitz Eustace resided, and, entering unobserved, or at least unquestioned, for he was a well known visiter of the English Nobleman, he mounted the stairs for the first time, with uncontrolled pleasure. A smile of bitter, stern, determination, crossed his countenance, as he approached the Baron's room door, which he gently opened. Mrs. Hamilton was the sole occupant of the apartment, and, for an instant, a slight change was visible in her look, when she recognised the intruder.

Frederic had expected, and intended, to see Lord Fitz Eustace, or his son, therefore he felt somewhat startled on finding himself alone with Maria; but his resolution was immediately formed, and he determined to take advantage of the propitious moment, by making her the depository of the explanation he had intended for the ears of her father or brother.

"Pardon this intrusion, Mrs. Hamilton,"

he said, advancing towards her. "I came with the hope of finding his Lordship at home."

"My father has been gone out a few minutes only, Major Sinclair," she replied, in her usual manner, "and I am sorry I cannot inform you when he is likely to return."

"May I then hope—may I request, Mrs Hamilton, you will allow me to make the application to yourself, which I had intended to make through his lordship?"

Maria turned a little pale, and for an instant hesitated, when he continued, "You leave Naples to-morrow, I believe,—and we part for ever! Would, indeed, we had never met, for both our sakes-but fate has ordered it otherwise! We have long been acquainted, and ansortunate circumstances have conspired to give you an evil opinion of me, as unjust as it is unfounded—I know appearances have been against me—I know I have at times been imprudent, but I have not merited the scorn and hatred you have manifested lately. would live in your memory without reproach, and I come, as a suppliant, to request you will listen to an explanation of my apparently guilty conduct."

"No, no, Major Sinclair," interrupted Maria, quickly, half rising as she spoke, "I

cannot hear all this—Indeed you are ungenerous to require me to revert to the past."

"Let me entreat you, Mrs. Hamilton," he replied, in a tone of remonstrance, "as you value the happiness of a fellow creature, to hear me—you cannot refuse, I see you will not." He gently laid his hand upon her arm to detain her, when she said, "You will not oblige me to remain, Major Sinclair?"

"No, by heavens!" he returned, drawing back, and colouring highly. "Yet, be not so obdurate, Maria, you once were kind—be so again, and I will promise, if you desire it, nay, I will swear, never to annoy you again by my presence." His tone was so earnest, yet so sad, that Mrs. Hamilton found it impossible to resist, and her determination of frigidity was half vanquished, when he pronounced her name in his expostulation.

In a tremulous voice she said, as she remaid herself, "If I can give you any satisfaction of according your demand, I am ready to do to but——"

"Ah! Mrs. Hamilton, spare me any objections, and permit me to avail myself your generosity—Your manner the last has convinced me that you have neither given, nor forgotten, the occurrence which

place some time ago, and conduct of mine, which was certainly liable to censure, however much it was intended for the best—I am about to speak of thoughts and feelings you are to consider as long since dead, therefore, let not their expression distress you, for to testify my innocence is my only object."

Maria trembled violently, but, not attempting to interrupt him, he continued, "You believe me base enough to have sought to alienate your affection from your husband—I heard the foul clumny breathed in your presence, by whom I know not; and though, at that moment, I could have refuted it, as conscientiously as I lo now, I was so stunned at the charge, so earful of giving you unnecessary pain, that I esolved sooner to be considered a heartless, a etected villain, than inflict one pang on-on beheart of-of my friend-I may have felt ncere pleasure in your society,—I may have ajoyed too much of your friendship, but heaven my witness how little I thought of injuring ou, or I would long before have sacrificed very wish, every hope, as indeed, I had done, my duty. When first I knew you, Mrs. lamilton, I was blindly led by my feelings to ke a dangerous delight in your kindness, on which I was not aroused until duty called

man, who seed Bogs, who ther good to a man bound of the name."

Maria started, the colour fled "Siaclair," she said, hurrical of the grave ! Alis! what do "My duty," returned the " but let me proceed---I said I I I could have sacrificed ever deration to have called you m poor! - I was natitled! - I could ask you to seek poverty and obs I heard Lord Fitz Eustace so Hances for his family, and I con to probe your sentiments, only to quit you for ever -for my love y I tole myself away from Merto toa, without revealing the fire tha for your sake, leaving the field o Loasented to be condemned

steed, and is not to be managed without a watchful eye, and a severe bit. I had relaxed both these over mine, and I paid the penalty. Do you credit this declaration? Can you exculpate me, in this instance, from wilful deceit?"

"I must not doubt your word, your honour, Major Sinclair," returned Mrs. Hamilton, with an effort, for an instant raising her eyes from the floor, where they were firmly directed. She, indeed, had more the appearance of a criminal than he who addressed her, for she dared not look at Frederic, for fear of betraying the emotions which struggled in her bosom. Every word she was constrained to utter, she feared would force with it the surcharged tear, which already stood in her eye; while her colour came, and went, with a rapidity denoting her suffering.

Sinclair, on the contrary, sat nearly opposite to her, calm and undaunted, though, now and then, as he marked her increasing agitation, a hade of augmented sadness passed over his tatures. "I thank you," he answered, coldly. My word may then, perhaps, suffice to conince you that my honour was outraged by ting supposed the betrayer of the wife of my riend; at least, a friend in the general acceptation of the word—the cruel deceiver of the

woman I once loved—and for whom I had sacrificed my happiness on earth."

Here his overpowered auditress, unable longer to repress her feelings, covered her face with her handkerchief, to conceal the teas which flowed copiously, and Sinclair continued more earnestly: "Oh! Mrs. Hamilton, belien me imprudent-believe me arrogant of my mental powers-believe me selfish-but acquit the of the wish to injure you—to supersede your late husband in your affection. That fatal, that base, declaration, which warned you of your supposed danger from me, has never ceased to vibrate in my ear, and to tell me that, though not guilty of the criminal intertion it denounced, at least. I had entailed mortification on you, and hatred and disgust on myself. Willingly would I have refuted the accusation before I went to Ireland, but how could I clear myself from the imputed crime, without owning the ardent, the imprudent, love I had once entertained for you-without conmitting the very fault of which I was accused, by declaring how deep, how unchangeable had been my affection for Miss Delmar? a declartion which was forbidden to the ear of Mr. Hamilton. I saw I should only appear more despicable in your eyes, and I was silent

Judge my feelings since the time I left you my conduct unexplained, my character, with you, blighted—judge the agony I endured in determining to quit you, knowing I must be considered all—and perhaps much more—than I had heard myself proclaimed! But I overcame it, to spare you the pain of declarations I knew might not gain belief, for I had no means of proving my innocence. When we met here, Mrs. Hamilton, Lord Fitz Eustace, to our mutual aversion, invited me to his table, and I have in vain endeavoured to shun his kindness for your, and my own, sake; I have felt your severity far deeper than I dare express: and, when I heard to-day you were going to fly my hated vicinity, I determined to inform your father of the truth. You know the rest, Mrs. Hamilton; I found you alone, I have told you all—will you acquit—will you believe, me?"

Maria would have spoken, but her chest heaved convulsively, her breath came thick and short, while the large tears rolled over her pale cheeks. Sinclair took her offered hand, and, gazing earnestly upon her, continued, "Will you forgive the avowal of my love, Maria, and believe the purity of that alone

was a sufficient barrier to any evil designs against you?"

"I will—I do, indeed, Frederic," at length she articulated, with difficulty; "I believe you have been calumniated, and that honour has guided your conduct throughout. Perhaps, indeed, I have not thought so ill of you as you have supposed."

"Then, why Maria, treat me so contemptsously—why leave Naples on my account?"

The blood rushed in torrents into Mr. Hamilton's face, the tears again started to her eyes; but, before she could answer, Frederic resumed, with less distance, than he had before maintained, "Have I been mistaken, and do you go against your will?"

"Lord Fitz Eustace's health—" she faltered.

"Ah! true, I had forgotten." One instant he paused; his countenance assumed a darker expression, then rising, abruptly, he took her hand, saying, "May every earthly good attend you, Mrs. Hamilton! I deeply thank you for the patience, the indulgence, with which you have listened to me; and your kind exculpation has restored me, if not to happiness, at least to the prospect of content. Pity and

forget the ill-fated Frederic Sinclair." He relinquished her hand, and turned to the door, but, ere he reached it, the unfortunate Maria, as she faintly uttered his name, had sunk senseless on the floor.

In one second, Sinclair was again at her side, in no small alarm; with dangerous tenderness he raised and bore her to a sofa; and, having essayed in vain to restore her suspended animation, by freely admitting the air into the apartment, and calling her by every endearing name, he was about to summon some one to Maria's assistance, when the room door opened, and Lord Fitz Eustace, with Mr. and Mrs. Delmar, entered.

"Thank Heaven!" exclaimed the major, with an earnestness which amply testified his Previous anxiety, "thank Heaven! you are returned, my lord, in time to save her."

"Save who?" said the baron, eagerly, as he dvanced to the couch. "Maria! Sinclair! vhat does all this mean?"

"Mrs. Hamilton has been taken ill, my ord," returned Frederic, impatiently, while scatrice hastened up to the couch, and began o attempt Maria's renovation.

"And are you the cause of her indisposition, ir?" enquired her father, in no gentle tone.

"Unhappily, I am my lord. I had taken my leave of Mrs. Hamilton, when she was seized in the manner you see."

"You were going to leave her, then?" said Mortimer, looking quickly at his father.

"I was, Mr. Delmar-to leave her for ever!" After pronouncing these words, with bitter emphasis, he turned, with his companions, to the invalid, who appeared now to be recover-Her eyes, as they unclosed, wandered anxiously from one affectionate face to another of those friends who surrounded her, until they rested on that of Sinclair, when her cheek crimsoned, and, bursting into tears, she for some time sobbed hysterically. That single look, however, had been enough for Frederic How often is not the language of the eye more eloquent than words! That single look bespoke feelings which he had not ventured for one moment to harbour; feelings he had come to renounce—to resign for ever! It told him of a love until now unknown, and against which he had so vehemently struggled. and motionless he stood—the sudden revulsion from despair to hope, created by this glance, almost transfixed him-he looked fearfully upon Maria, scarcely believing the evidence of his senses, so unexpected had been the ray of

comfort which now pierced through the cloud of deepest gloom, which had overshadowed him so long.

He forgot every prudential measure, he forgot his want of title—he forgot he was in the presence of any save her he had so hopelessly loved, and, taking her hand in his trembling grasp, he silently, but fervently, pressed it. The thrill of delight which ran through his frame, as he recognised her timid return, recalled him to himself, when he saw that his friends had left him alone with Mrs. Hamilton.

The kind Mortimer, in fact, divining the cause of his beloved sister's indisposition, no somer saw that she had partially recovered than he gently drew his wife and father from the room; and, as he closed the door, his affectionate heart glowed with the anticipated pleasure of seeing Maria at length restored to happiness, by becoming the cherished wife of the only man she had ever loved.

Having modestly, and considerately, accompanied Delmar in his retreat, we must plead ignorance of the conversation which succeeded between Frederic and Maria. We believe, however, our readers are sufficiently acquainted with the dispositions of each to fathom the result. Mutually attached, though restrained

from evincing or acknowledging their real feelings, by their high sense of honour, the only required a few minutes of renewed confdence to remove the veil which had so long hung around the actions of each. Sinclairs undisguised explanation had paved the way. to the subsequent declaration of his unbounded Need we say how sincerely, though timidly, it was returned, or how rapturously Frederic received the promise of the hand be had despaired of obtaining. No! all those who have followed him in his upright path can imagine his feelings, and will believe, although Mrs. Hamilton required in her concession, that the eighteenth month of her widowhood should have expired, ere she became hishe thought himself supremely blessed-and most joyfully accepted the conditions. Lord Fitz Eustace neither could nor would object to the contemplated union—he had imbibed too strong a desire of repairing the errors he had committed in arranging Maria's former marriage, not to acquiesce most cordially in this second alliance of her own choice.

It was on the following morning, to that on which the major had expected for ever to be separated from her whose image had so long been enshrined in his heart, that he obtained itire approval of his lordship to the con-

have received too severe a lesson, Sin-' said he, "not to listen with a willing the appeal of affection, for I feel per-1 you had Maria's love long before I unately exerted my power; and, although as the exemplary wife of Hamilton, her could never be called his. She is a gem value, my young friend," he continued, conducted our enraptured soldier into joining room, where Mrs. Hamilton was with her brother and Beatrice. r blushed deeply, and her eyes were sufwith tears, not those of grief, however, r father, placing her hand in that of ric, said to the latter, in reference to his ords, "Take and appreciate her, for she d to adorn the state of the man she loves: ou both be as happy as you deserve to be. eward for your trials and unshrinking .-I trust experience has taught me to or surer hopes of felicity, in that of my on, than in the attainment of empty and dazzling splendour, which are, at best, nstable foundations for real happiness. rell amidst the four beings I love most on and to contemplate your smiling countenances," he pursued, looking affect at his companions, "will be a comfor after all the evil that I have broug myself and others."

This undisguised avowal of a chesentiment amply testified how keen Fitz Eustace had felt the late events, have crushed all his darling schemes former cherished hopes; and, by degmake him regard the love of his child more solicitude than their aggrand But so it was, he had been brought I pointment, illness, and consequent r to acknowledge his faults; and, though the first time he had openly declared ings, his son and daughter had some tiperceived, with pleasure, that he was I a convert to the superiority of men external, qualifications.

"I trust, my lord," replied Sinclair, Maria, nor you, will ever have to re generous kindness that is now confer me. That I may prove myself wort believe me, shall be my constant ende

"I doubt it not, Frederic," answered ship, smiling; "and if ever looks we index of the mind, Maria's declare he confidence—I am now only solicitous bould be happy, and love each other, which persuaded such conduct as yours cannot ermanently to secure."

united in thanking the Baron for his ying expressions of satisfaction in their, assuring him, at the same time, of their int desire to afford him every comfort in lower—a promise they failed not to fulfil: e once haughty Baron, for some months, a purer draught of happiness in the of his amiable children, though neither insulted his former ambitious views, than lever enjoyed, when in the full contem-

Beatrice, and Frederic, he gained a new d daughter, who vied with his own in ng the pillow of disease; and, when, a onths after seeing Maria and Sinclair plubly united, he sank into the grave, his eath was employed in returning thanks wen for warning him of his dangerous; and giving him time for repentance, to due appreciation of the different memor his family.

a of his lofty flights.

CHAPTER XXI.

*Now let us thank th' Eternal Power; convinc'd That Heaven but tries our virtue by affliction: That oft the cloud which wraps the present hour Serves but to brighten all our future days."

ANONT MOUS

SIR George Heron, and his kind mother alternated between the Metropolis and the estates of the former, during the absence of their friends from England, in whose joys and sorrows they failed not to sympathise, though the accounts they received from America diverted their thoughts for some time. Sir George, indeed, was more anxious about Lady Dinely than might have been expected, after all that had passed; but the baronet still felt an unchangeable interest in his cousin, an arder wish for her happiness, increased, perhaps, by the conviction that she had taken a doubted means for procuring it.

ery short time confirmed the sad foreshe had formed, in his several oppors of judging of Mary's prospects, for letters from the Western world breathed of grief and despondency, which deeply l her friends. Sir Harry continued to te his remaining property by gambling, less of the interests of his wife and n, until he became again involved to a il amount. The interest of Mary's prolone preserved them from distress, and ed the means for a constant change of by which they eluded his importunate rs.

this intelligence, a long interval sucwithout any farther tidings of her, and nds began to entertain the greatest uns, when their minds were diverted by nouncement of Lord Fitz Eustace's det Milan, and the intention of his family ir to their native country. But, ere this proposal could be accomplished, letters lew York arrived, conveying the disnews of the death of Sir Harry Dinely, d fallen in a duel, leaving his family in lifficulties. The friend, who communinis intelligence, expressed the greatest ness with regard to the widow, who was completely overcome by the dreadful shock, and serious apprehensions were entertained for her life. These accounts were speedily followed by others in confirmation of their worst fears. Every thing had been done to restore Lady Dinely, but in vain. She had expired a few weeks after her husband of a fever, leaving a letter, the last she had written, which she desired might be delivered with her child into the hands of her aunt.

"In consequence of this request," ran the words of the letter from her friend, "I will send the boy to England as soon as I receive funds for that purpose, until which time, I, myself will be his guardian." Upon this every measure was adopted by the Herons to further the intentions of the benevolent friend of the ill-fated Mary; and in anxious suppense they waited for the answers to the letters they had immediately despatched.

Nearly two years had elapsed, since the village bells of Bernersford had pealed merrily in celebration of the marriage of the honourable Mortimer Delmar, when the Hall again became the theatre of rejoicing from the anticipated arrival of the travellers, who had promised to dedicate some weeks to Sir George and Lady Heron, upon their return to England, prior to their installation in their own residences.

e day on which they were expected was of nervous agitation to the good Lady i; she had every thing in preparation hours before there was any possibility ir accomplishing the journey; and, inca-of settling herself to her usual avocashe wandered from room to room in ent restlessness.

Heorge also, notwithstanding his vaunted m, loitered round the house, or spent his a watching the various objects through escope, as they passed along the high at some distance. Sometimes he threw f on the velvet lawn, and endeavoured l, but in vain! the book was soon hurled istance; and he again returned to his to discuss the probable time of their arrival. Five o'clock came, and a patience was on the wane, when he into the room where Lady Heron was, to apprise her of their approach.

baronet received his beloved sister on me spot they had parted, and, for some its, every feeling was absorbed in the joy re-union. All were warmly welcomed, e reception George gave his friend was sive of the strong brotherly affection had sprung from the pure seeds of friendship, that for so many years had bound them together. In boyhood they had learnt we appreciate the character of each other, and they mutually rejoiced in the prospect of their constant communion afforded by their remains tionship.

The lovely infant that Beatrice had presented... to her fond husband, a few months before, cannot in for a due share of admiration, and tended!! by its presence to enhance the delight of the travellers' return.

Major and Mrs. Sinclair were equally satisfied with the attention lavished upon them, and uninterrupted happiness and comfort reigned throughout the mansion. The whole party indeed appeared like one large family, so well did they assimilate, and Lady Heron participated most fully in the blessings around her.

The untimely fate of her niece alone acted as a corrective to the unbounded satisfaction she received from the approximation of all the loved; but when, after some time, the little child arrived in England, and, according to the wishes of its mother, become the ward of the George Heron, she felt more resigned to loss, from an idea that, in cherishing the years scion of the house of Dinely, she had the wholly been deprived of the power of additional to the power of additional

naternal affection for her niece. From the ppy Mary's letter, her friends learnt with the misery she had brought upon herself, gh her folly. Happiness had fled from nce her marriage, for her husband had d her with the utmost harshness, partly ad, she allowed, for indifference, and htless levity had marked her conduct. severely, however, was she punished, for nsidered herself as the sole cause of Sir's death, as the duel originated from a a caused by her flirtation.

s had this foible been her bane, for, by had lost the love of her cousin, the of her friends, and the life of her husbesides innumerable hours of distress self.

concluded her letter by the strongest exons of repentance, and sincere hopes of a for her trangressions, in which the s most fervently united.

rs have rolled away, since the events detailed. Smiling families have crowned tions of the Sinclairs and Fitz Eustaces, nting the happiness of all.

George Heron is still single, and, for the t, appears determined to preserve his. His house, where his venerable mother

continues to preside as formerly, is the constant resort and rendezvous of his family and friends, among whom, Frederic Sinclair and his doting parent hold no inconsiderable place. Our friend, Mortimer Delmar, now Lord Fits Eustace, has placed a tablet, in Claybrook church, to the memory of Ellen, of whose existence no other trace now remains, save that. her virtues and sorrows have left in the minds of those who loved her; for her child who might have demanded their attention, fell a victim to the hooping-cough, when about two vears old. Yet, although the same motive does not exist for Lord Fitz Eustace's return to a spot rendered so painful by circumstances. as if it had lived, he has frequently been seen during his temporary visits to Heron Castle, attended by his beloved Beatrice, beside the humble grave of the Village Flower, and team of pity have moistened the turf beneath which innocence and virtue repose-

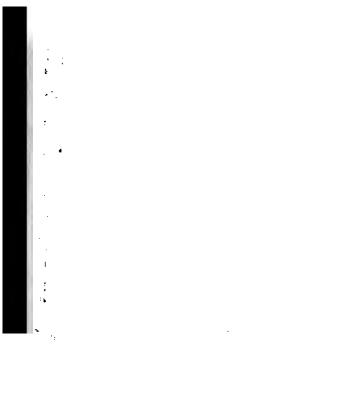
> " In vain the dews of Heaven descend above, The bleeding flower, and blasted fruit of love."

Having thus assembled all our surviving friends, and made them pass in review before us, we draw a curtain over the future; hoping that those who may have leisure, or inclination

w the steps of the Baron's family will wledge the danger of committing a first and the evils attendant upon pride and ness, in opposition to the permanent adges derivable from a strict adherence to sity and uprightness.

every one beware of the first fault, since npossible to tell into what a labyrinth of they may be drawn, ere they have power tricate themselves, and at length are ken in their guilty course by a just, h perhaps a heavy, punishment.

THE BND.



HIGHFIELD TOWER.



HIGHFIELD TOWER.

CHAPTER I.

Sighing, as through the shadowy past, Like a tomb-searcher, memory ran, Lifting each shroud that time had cast O'er buried hopes, he thus began:—

was a beautiful summer evening, the sun was just sinking into a radiant bank of clouds, which veiled the western horizon, and the bright fleecy vapours that emanated from his receding glory, hovering round his retreat, like gay and dazzling courtiers in the write of Majesty, spreading themselves in long trains over the clear blue vault of heaven; each tint increasing in brilliancy as the orb of day declined. The air, yet impregnated with the noontide heat, slightly agitated the leaves and smaller branches of the noble

timber trees, which stood in picturesqu groups over a wide extent of park land bearing on its balmy breath the sweet sign of many a tiny vocalist, mingled with the at tinkle of the sheep-bell, and the low hund the neighbouring village, which lay without the verge of the domain. Upon a slight devation towards the centre of the estate, the site of an ancient fortress, stood an extensive square building of red brick, which was partially concealed by a clump of luxuriant cedars, though sufficient was visible to denote the form and scale of the edifice. It was flanked on one side only by a solitary wing, which would have imparted an air of irregularity to the whole, had not the conservatory. the work of modern days, stood on the other side, and partly compensated for this apparent error in the structure. The velvet lava. separated by an invisible fence from the park, sloped away on the left to a fine sheet of water, which, from a small though mid stream in the higher part of the valley, here assumed the character of a lake, studded with woody islets.

A handsome stone bridge of a single set and simple architecture, was thrown acres

narrowest part, over which ran the road the entrance-gate to the mansion.

on the parapet leaned a stout, healthy of about fifty years of age, whose apince bespoke him an upper servant bed to the property. For some minutes ves wandered with visible pride and action over the pleasing scene around he seemed to contemplate every thing inward pride, until the lake became the : of his observation, when a shade of choly crossed his brow, and he quickly I to another part of the park, the conation of which appeared more gratifying. pproach of a young man, his junior by nd-twenty summers, in a similar rank of his own, roused him, and he turned a smile, saying, "Well, Plowden, how ir father to-night?"

hank you, Mr. Prior, he is something," replied he, "and we have yet hopes ing him about again."

hat is well, Ralph; but what brings you this evening?"

h! nothing particular, sir, only I thought ild just take a stroll through the park, e new Earl comes down to-morrow. I

State State of the State of the

"I should be sa "I should be sa "I sa glad yo so you know an prired the young "Very little,

pess dles early return to this co Devenshire. He my lete lord, and Lord Stracy, the don some months man he is, about t should think."

" Well! it will for Highfield Towe know it has been a "Yes, Plowden," rejoined Mr. Prior with a sep sigh and a shake of the head; "it is a atter of fifteen years since the death of the untess, and her husband never returned re after that. I know he could not bear on to think of the place. Poor gentleman! lost his all in losing her." Again Mr. ior bent over the bridge, and gazed on the iet landscape, with mixed pleasure and in. Ralph, however, was not inclined to him indulge his thoughtful mood, for he ickly said,

"I wonder he did not dispose of the prorty, as he had such an aversion to it."

"Doubtless he would have done so," ansered his companion, "had not his lady resested him to keep the place, for her sake."

"Oh! indeed, I never heard that."

"Come then," replied the functionary kindly, let us go down to the village, for I must see impson to-night; and we will share a mug fale, while I tell you about the event which leprived us of our lord's presence."

This proposition was willingly acceded to by Plowden, and a quarter of an hour's walk brought the companions to the little cluster of cottages forming the village of Highfield.

Notwithstanding it did not number more

than one-hundred-and-fifty inhabitants, it could boast its church, and tidy alchouse, both equally indebted for their erection to the late noble proprietor of Highfield Towes: and its cottages, scattered over an area of a quarter of a mile in extent, were all nearly white-washed, and bore an air of comfort and cleanliness which could not fail to convey as impression of the happiness and contentment of their inmates.

Mr. Prior proceeded immediately to discuss his business with the jolly host of the Trefeil Arms; after which he called for the ale, and sat down with Ralph, on the rustic beach which encircled the old tree before the dose of the little inn.

"You must have heard, Plowden," he middle in a few minutes, "that I have been many years at Highfield, indeed, it is turned twesty five since I was engaged by my late master as superintend this estate. He was then in the habit of spending much of the summer with the Countess, who was so greatly attacked to the place, that it was not without difficult to the place, that it was not without difficult he persuaded her to leave it for the gainting London, and the fashionable watering with their seasons. She was much youngesty my lord, who did not marry till rather had a season to the place.

le; and she was altogether one of the most eautiful and sweetest ladies ever seen. be and kind to all-so sensible, and willing to the friend of those who required her as-She it was who built the cottages our poor, and procured land to be allotted She established the school, and arded prizes to the most deserving in the lage. It is not therefore wonderful if she re almost adored; and the young Lord acy-for at that time she had a noble boys almost as much a favourite as herself. emember, as if it were but yesterday, how rily he used to dance round me, as I went out my business in various parts of the ate, enquiring the meaning and use of all agricultural proceedings. Then he would l me what he would do when he became a a, and how he would have me for Poor fellow! I little thought, at se happy moments, how soon his gay ice would be hushed, and his light laugh no wer heard in his favourite fields." od man paused an instant; and his comnion said:-

"Ah! how old was my young lord, then, r. Prior? I scarcely ever heard you menh him."

- It is a sore subject with me," reje Fig. 5. 21y. "I loved him nearly a me jung children, and it was some t res from before I could bear to hear l viti mapisare. He was, I think, abo to rive, then; a fine, daring boy, the must say, a spoiled one. Well, h the same rates, until he was thirteen. her heremized to send him to Wes with with thet he might learn, as he him not that there were others in the wor the light of besides himself; which, I n " as year past and necessary, for Lor sters not the meaning of the word on This that was strongly combatted by: was having lost all her other childs NOTE: was doubly averse to giving only the same: but the Earl said so m appeared so bent upon the measure. it length consented, on condition t sherli reside entirely in London, to the child. It was a sad change to us a here. I assure you, when they left; I of Lord Stracey's holidays were a Highfeld: and we expected the return facult. as soon as his education was o at Westminster. Thus passed two yes the midsummer vacation brought d

Earl, with a large party of friends, and, for the last time, we were gay. Lord Stracy was so grown and improved we scarcely knew him, though he still continued the same kind. amiable, creature he had ever been, and all went on happily for several weeks. Now, during the time my young lord had been at school, he had become very fond of boating; and, being an excellent hand at the oar, many was the morning he spent in rowing about the lake in the park, though my lady, having a great aversion to the water, used often to endeavour to prevent his indulging in his favourite amusement. Unhappily, her worst fears were too fatally realised! Never shall I forget that sad day! and when you found me to-night, Ralph, on the bridge, the pleasure I experienced in seeing the estate I have so long superintended look so nice and flourishing, previous to the arrival of my new lord, was so mixed up with the pain recalled by the scene of Lord Stracy's death, that I cannot tell which preponderated; and, I really was quite glad when you joined me."

"I can easily comprehend your feelings, Mr. Prior, but I will not interrupt you."

"It was a beautiful morning in August," proceeded the other, "and I was in one of the

new plantations, about a mile from the house, when Lord Stracy came to me; and, after asking several questions about the business I was upon, said, as he went away, 'My father is coming down here this morning, Prior, on his way to Barron Farm; therefore, be so good as to tell him I shall meet him there.' These were the very last words he spoke to any one, Plowden!"

"Poor young gentleman," said his attentive listener, "then it was the very farm my father now holds he appointed to go to. But pray go on, Mr. Prior: how did the accident happen?"

"We never knew, exactly," returned the good bailiff, "but I will tell you all we found out. The Earl arrived about mid-day, and, after hearing his son's message, continued his walk. I thought no more about the matter until four o'clock in the afternoon, when one of the servants came, and asked me if I could tell him where Lord Stracy was? at the same time saying that the Earl had not seen him at Barron Farm; consequently, both he and my lady were very uneasy. I knew nothing of him, but I immediately accompanied the man to the lake; for my young master had so often been found there, that it was the first place I

tht of. The boat was not to be seen, but sure of finding my lord somewhere near, went on to that part, where the wood 3 so much over the water. On turning orner beyond the bridge, the first thing met my sight was a floating oar, and, dly knew why, I felt a cold shudder run gh me; while a vague sensation of fear ssed me. I loudly called my young r, and, receiving no answer, hurried on the boat appeared, turned bottom up-3. This completely did for me, Plowden; e moment the horrible truth flashed on ind, and I became almost unable to act ink, when Lord Stracy's hat was found the boat; and little doubt could be ained of the dreadful accident we had to No time, however, was to be lost; I ly procured assistance; but, almost before d recovered from our first horror, suffiy to take the necessary measures in such the wretched news having spread like e, the distracted Earl and Countess us: and, notwithstanding the most t entreaties to the contrary, they perin remaining to witness the process of ing that part of the lake. Never shall et the frantic scream of my lady, as our

which followed, it is enough our exertions failed to restor and, from that hour, his mother head! Her reason forsoweeks, and when, by degrees, the recovered, her health graduall Earl watched her with the mobut he could not persuade her field, when change of air and commended; for she loved it, her former happiness; and her many months of patient suffer "That was indeed melanched"

to my mind's eye, as at the occurrence. But I dare not th

Plowden, when Mr. Prior pau to the foaming jug by his sid the Earl lest the place."

"No, indeed, Ralph, he was me was irremediable; and all felt it oly to care to open their lips upon so ing a subject. Thus, as soon as the last ad been paid to the countess, Lord set off for France, and never again set on this part of his property."

not surprised at that," returned the armer, "no doubt he hated the place, ving lost all he valued most in the ere."

ruth, I believe so, Ralph, but, as I said my lady having an affection for the would not part with it." After a ary pause, he continued, "Do you really think, I shall not like to have d re-occupied by strangers at first, I am sure I shall endeavour to reconcile them. The earl is in very bad health

spoke, "and I thank you much for your tale."

"You are quite welcome, Ralph, but do not go without another glass of ale. Let us finish the jug. Here is to the health and happiness of Highfield, under its new master." The young friend of the bailiff made no objection to the toast, or the proffered refreshment, and, a few minutes' after, having pledged each other, they separated and returned home.

All was anxiety among the simple-minded villagers on the following day, for the arrival of the strangers, and numerous were the spect-lations on the probable advantages, or disadvantages, to be anticipated from the re-occupation of Highfield Tower. The young fauced the gaiety which would follow; the more arranged in life recalled, with satisfaction, the kindness of the late Earl and Countess; while the aged hoped they might not find any change for the worse from the expected arrival.

The curiosity of the whole village, however, was excited; and, towards six o'clock, almost the whole of its inhabitants had assembled the park gates, for the purpose of welcombit the new lord. Every inequality of ground; every gate was taken possession of, as a looked out point; and, for some time, every case.

'Ve was on the stretch to catch the earliest ound, or the first glimpse of the approaching arriage. An hour passed, and signs of impaience began to appear, some even talked of ving home, but were laughed out of it by their ss hasty companions; and others, weary of he elevated positions they had taken up, deended, and threw themselves on the grass, hile the children began to give vent to their ong suppressed merriment, and to defy every stempt of their seniors for the preservation of ilence and order. The evening, in short, was befinning to close, ere a light britska turned the omer of the road within sight, startling all by usudden appearance without any notice; but which was easily accounted for by the contitued and boisterous mirth of the vounger portion of the party.

No time was lost by the peasants, upon the cry of "They are coming," in ranging themelves by the road side, notwithstanding the violent collision of several in the general haste; and they stood uncovered, to do honour to their lord. The carriage rapidly advanced; and when its speed was for a moment arrested, by passing the park gate, the men simultaleously gave a cheer of congratulation, the formen curtsied, and the eyes of all were di-

rected towards an old gentleman, who, far from returning the salutation, shrank into the corner of the carriage, as if anxious to escape their notice; waving his hand impatiently at the same time, in token of disapproval.

This ungracious reception of their spontaneous civility, however, was partly compensated for, by the proceeding of a young man, occupying the rumble, who, without the least hesitation, removed his hat, and with a gay smile joined them in their hurrah.

As the humble party adjourned to the Trefoil Arms, and loitered for a few minutes around the favourite tree in its vicinity; many were the remarks hazarded upon the conduct and appearance of the newly arrived.

Some wondered who the youth was who had so opportunely seconded their expressions of pleasure, while others spoke in terms of disappointment of the bearing of the Earl; or regretted they had been induced to leave their homes at all, for so short-lived a gratification as that of seeing the earl enterhis own domains which gratification they thought ill compensated the trouble of watching three hours.

Ralph Plowden, however, was among the ferwhom appeared willing to be satisfied; for harman argued the reported illness of the Earl, as a

for his apparent want of courtesy, at e time that he declared he was sure racy, whom he recognised, from Mr. description of the young man on the e, would soon be a great favourite in age.

ould not, however, succeed in gaining ny of his companions, though he quitted th a firm adherence to his own opinion, nened, as it was, by the information of id, the worthy bailiff.

sortes, burg.

475E

On his gay ver Had not yet Yet had not And fiery ver Forward and The will to come The sparklin Of hasty love

"Where is Stracy of Trefoil, on the folhis seat at the breahis plate for a slice other was presiding "Surely, my lord,

so addressed, and whave attained his fift pect his lordship of pensity on such a m is so large a scope my room an hour or two since, but, as not inclined to join him in his left the house alone."

che might have waited until he accompanied me," continued the he is so thoughtless. Clara," he o a young lady about twenty, who on his right, "you must lend rm in my walk this morning, as er has deserted his post."

the greatest pleasure, sir; but stracy will return soon, for he is nted with your habits: perhaps he nexpectedly detained."

little Clara," rejoined her father, s hand affectionately upon hers, ou are never at a loss for an excuse iends; but Egerton is almost too nes."

indeed, my dear father; but you reliction from your orders of strict is more the effect of his ardent ch carry him away, than from any error."

and believe you are right, my still I am inclined to fear his will lead him beyond his depth in ol of excitement." "Nay, nay," he continued with a smile, at the same time looking round the table, at which were scated, besides those already mentioned, his lady and younger children. The former his junior by thirty years; and the latter, a youth of about fifteen, and two little girls of tender age. "Nay, nay, I see I must not say anything against him, as there are so many about to take up his cause. One to six are fearful odds, so I must beat a retreat, and retire in good order before a superior force. Prudence is always the better part of courage."

"Here he comes, at last," exclaimed Algernon, as he observed his absent brother at a bound clear the invisible fence, which separated the lawn from the park; "here he comes at last, looking as hot as if he had been walking through the hot winds for a week. Why, Stracy," he pursued, as he approached the window, through which the stray one now entered, "where have you been all this time? we have almost done breakfast."

"That is unfortunate, for I have yet to commence mine, Algernon," said the other gaily; "however, I see you have not cleared the board."

n, coming to the table, he saluted the nd Countess with an air of easy nonce, nodding familiarly to the others. Ou are late, sir," was all his father said, racy drew a chair forward and took sion of it.

m I, indeed?" he responded, in a tone sumed surprise, wherein a spice of tion might be detected; whilst he took s watch. "Half-past ten, by Jupiter! no idea I had so far exceeded my time. you ten thousand pardons, my dear sir, breach of duty; but I was beguiled by icoat so far that I lost my way."

fair excuse, I suppose you think, my returned the earl; "but, I assure you, rather you had offered me a less dans one. Have a care what you are."

ay, sir, you take the matter too sey. I spoke quite literally, for I never to face of the object of my pursuit. But thange of air has made me devilish y. I will trouble you for a wing of that m, Horace, and do let me have some lara, in the name of all that is merciful." Tell! but Stracy," said Algernon, "do to where you have been?"

"Patience, boy," returned the brother, good humouredly, "do you not see our father is ready to go out, and I have not yet finished my breakfast?"

"Yes, but he has enlisted Clara in is service, so you may stay a little longer."

"There is no occasion to hurry, Egerton," said his father, who was gratified by his anxiety to repair the unintentional error of the morning. "I can give you half an hour to rest yourself, before I require your attendance."

With these words he left the room, where, notwithstanding the renewed solicitations of Algernon, Lord Stracy dispatched his meal, before he permitted a word to escape him relating to his early adventure.

Lady Trefoil and his sister, having then retired to prepare for their walk, he said gaily to the ladies Helen and Charlotte who were playing about the room, "Come, make yourselves scarce, little people, or you will not be ready to go out."

"Do you think we may go with you Stracy!" said the former, "papa did not say so."

"Oh! I will take you under my wing, as I am Prime Minister."

He then took Horace Tulk, who was his

other's tutor, by the arm, and led him to elawn; when, turning to Algernon, he said a tone half angry, half playful, as he gave m a box on the right ear, which almost ade the boy's eyes flash fire,

"I'll teach you, you young dog, to question e upon my proceedings, in presence of the arl and Countess. I thought you knew atter than that. When, pray, did you detect at the confessional?"

For an instant the boy staggered with the low, and Horace took up his cause.

"You are too severe, Stracy," he said, in a leprecating tone, "ungenerous. Algernon rould not excite your father's anger intenionally."

"No, that I would not, Egerton; and I sesure you that your gentle hint shall suffice for my future instruction on the subject; such hints are too forcible to require frequent repetition." He laughed as he spoke, and Stracy replied, as he laid his hand on his brother's shoulder, "You are a good fellow, Algernon, and, as this grave and reverend signior says, I believe I was over hasty, for after all, you did not do any mischief, as it happened; so I will tell you what I saw in my ramble."



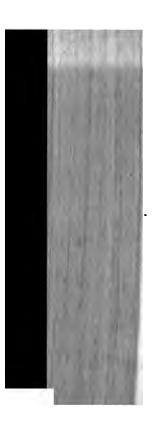
dark to see it as wanted to know houses about; on the other s length came in mansion; standesignate "a remarks upon something whit which flanked t don't know why raised my curic ving in this reti it was idleness, of all evil.

However, I field, leading d shrubbery; but, vered that a vo

ret sight of her, for I had already discovered he had the prettiest foot and ancle in the world; a perfect bijou of a foot. I am sure ou would have admired it, fastidious though ou be."

- "Very possibly," answered his friend uietly," but pray let us hear how far your minite prudence and discretion led you, in ursuit of your fair incognita."
- "Spare your irony, Mr. Tulk, if you blease;" replied the young lord, with affected lispleasure, "my discretion must not be questioned."
- "Because it cannot bear the ordeal, ch, Stracy? but go on."
- "Well; but where was I? Oh! creeping under the hedge. She was walking with a book in her hand, which, together with her straw bonnet, completely concealed her face, which of course was beautiful; for unless I had placed myself directly before her, I had no chance of a peep; why she selected such an inconvenient head gear, I cannot imagine, unless she be unfit to be looked at."

"Why did you not scale the enclosure, and take her by storm, Egerton?" asked his brother, laughing heartily at his distress.



ground; for a most furi of a dog, which I had n her train, flew towards that I was fain to return what quicker, too, than

what quicker, too, than "The dog, not being al yelping furiously, whilst immoveable behind a tre the statue, however, the bark, in spite of the call was evidently alarmed, retreat immediately."

"I am convinced I did I suppose she thought re course to adopt, for, in a her receding footsteps, seeing her lovely feature my disappointment, I h yelping cur, which sent lady, whom I watched imset off home; but it cos this young lady is, that I may scrape acquaint ance with her; in the solitude of the country, it will be an excellent pastime to fall in love: ah! I think I am touched already," laying his hand on his heart, and sighing deeply with affected distress.

"You are much to be pitied, truly," said Horace, laughing, "I know you are susceptible, Stracy, but I did not think a pretty foot could lead you into a breach of politeness, for such your invasion certainly was."

"Oh! but you are such a cool fellow," returned the other. Why, personal appearance, in your eyes, is valueless. You only look for that monster, called perfection?"

"Nay, you must not accuse me of coolness, for the description of your adventure convinces me you are far my superior in that qualification."

"Come, come, Horace, do not put on such a face of morality; I will be a good boy for the future," he said, with mock submission. "But here comes my father, so a truce to this nonsense."

They all rose quickly to meet his lordship, and his son continued, as he offered him the support of his youthful arm, "You have been munificent, my dear sir, in the allowance of VOL. II.

time for an irrealist: I must have been Imagerm indeed, to have required so much tone not interpreted yourseld. The steward and bailiff detained me loss and I mended but I told the latter to a me to me some plantation an hour hence, a loans mad my wilk. So saying, with his I at me other soie, and attended by the respective party the Earl proceeded to play the party the made meditated ramble.

CHAPTER III.

Going you say; and what intends the lad—
To seek his fortune? Fortune! Is he mad?
Has he the knowledge? Is he duly taught?
I think we know how fortune should be sought.
Perhaps he takes his chance to sink or swim.
Perhaps, he dreams of fortune seeking him.

CRABBE.

s many years since the Earl had visited field, the spot of his nativity; for, at sixthe Honourable Algernon Stracy, the gest of the two sons of his parents, had langland for the East, as an ensign. In hirty succeeding years that he continued tile, he successively trod the three next ds in the ladder of promotion; he became happy husband—the tender father—and lisconsolate widower of a lady, to whom is most fondly attached, and who fully ed his affection; and when, by her death, as left sole protector of his two infant

children, he resolved to accompany them have as soon as their age demanded the changes and his own affairs being arranged, his intentifiwas put into execution about two years afterly

He found his brother in the enjoyment the family honours, their father having suddenly within a few weeks of his son's my turn; and an unfortunate difference of opinion during the first year of their re-union completely estranged the brothers the rest of their lives. Colonel Stracy retired into the country, where he devoted himself entirely to the calture of a small estate he had purchased, and the care of his children, as far as the infina state of his health permitted. But he deeply felt the want of a companion, and saw that his girl and boy required the eye of a mother to watch their steps in early life, with that care? father is unequal to; and it therefore created little surprise among his friends when he again entered the blessed state of matrimony, by uniting himself to the daughter of an old miltary friend; a young woman of domestic virtage who had fulfilled the arduous duties of situation in the most exemplary manner, \$ the harmony in which the two families bad constantly resided could fully prove.

Colonel Stracy had not been married may

nths, when the distressing death of his bror's only son paved the way for his own
ltation to the Peerage; and although, upon
loccasion, he so far broke through the
rangement that subsisted between them, as
write to the Earl expressive of his symthy, the Colonel, being an ambitious chater, he felt secretly gratified at the prospect
his own boy eventually becoming the head
an ancient and noble house.

Where indeed must we look for the parent, ensible to the elevation of his offspring, wever careless he may be of his own!

His son, although most probably destined to orn, or be adorned by, a title, besides being only scion of the family, was early sent me home in the prosecution of his studies. Iturally of a delicate constitution, but fiery irit, young Stracy had many and great difficulties to surmount, in his initiation in school scipline, as well as much to endure before he destablished his character among his commions, who bitterly taunted him for his implement to combat with others of his own age. Perhaps, if Colonel Stracy had not lately mome the father of another son, and found is time fully taken up by his second matrimolal duties, he might have been more anxious

in trusting his boy, a perfect exotic, from this own eye; but, however it might have under other circumstances, true it seemed to have forgotten his child was all unequal to compete with a large school.

Fortunately for Egerton, on his first intriduction to the young gentlemen, by the principal of the establishment, he was placed und the protection of one of the pupils, about to years his senior. This boy, who was no oth than the Horace Tulk already mentioned, he been several years in the school, where he was a general favourite, at once became the charpion of the stranger, and soon won his kinder egards.

The parents of each lived but a few mix apart, and thus the attachment suffered a pang of separation at the vacation, for man days never elapsed in the following few year without their seeing each other. Mutual civilities were exchanged by the families of the Colonel and Mr. Tulk, in consequence, and Horace was often the guest of his friend for the week together.

Thus passed the time, until Egerton twelve years of age, when Horace was denly removed from school under very paint circumstances, to explain which, we must give a brief sketch of his family.

tather had been a clerk in a lawyer's the business with a young lady, posa good fortune, entirely at her own isposal. She was an orphan, and acted in direct opposition to the advice of her best friends, throughout the affair, for Mr. Tulk was * wild young man of five-and-twenty, in the receipt only of a few hundreds per annum, deived from his profession. He relinquished his usiness shortly after his marriage, removing to Devonshire, where he settled near Exeter. e was devoted to his wife, and no couple ald be happier than they were; her friends came reconciled to the match, and for some ears every thing around the Tulks wore the ost promising appearance. His children, of hom Horace was the favourite and youngest. ere well, though expensively, educated—his stablishment was conducted in good style, d himself and his lady received into the best ociety in the neighbourhood.

It was a surprise to some how he supported he expense attendant upon such a course, but I what consequence was it to their acquaintace in what manner their entertainments ere furnished, provided they were benefitted?

Eill, it was not an unexpected event, when it agan to be rumoured through the neighbour-

hood, that pecuniary considerations obliged Mr. Tulk to curtail his expenditure; or when, a few months after, financial embarrassments caused the disposal of all his property; the proceeds of which were found very inadequate to satisfy the demands of his creditors.

Then came the tardy, warning voice of those who had been the most constant in partaking his hospitality, with reproaches for his extravagance. They had long foreseen where all his gay doings would end—they had always heard he knew better how to spend his money than to earn it;—who could wonder at such a finale, when he had been vying with the great ones of the county? Did they not all know what he had with his wife, and that could not last for ever?—certainly, she had enjoyed it, for he appeared to have listened to all her wishes.

Of all these kind and friendly strictures, however, Mr. Tulk was unconscious, for he fled to France, when he found his insolvency must be discovered, leaving his wife to stand the brunt of the impending storm; and had not Colonel Stracy come to her assistance, she would have been ill able to weather it.

Through his means, everything was arranged as well as circumstances would allow, and herself and daughter sent to the Continent, to join Mr. Tulk, whose lasting gratitude was commanded by his friend's generous kindness to himself and family. On Horace's account, the Colonel bade the father have no fears for the present, as he would educate him with his own son, to whom Horace had evinced so much attachment.

The two other young Tulks were each already provided for, in the army and navy; therefore, their father might deem himself fortunate, at the winding up of his affairs, to find that he had only to provide for so limited a portion of those who might naturally look to him for support.

Through the kindness of his wife's relations, he procured a maintenance abroad, but did not long enjoy a temporary respite from the consequence of his imprudence; as the shock operated so forcibly on Mrs. Tulk that she gradually declined, and in a few months was no more.

Affection for his lady, ill-judged affection, had been the principal occasion of Mr. Tulk's folly; for he could not deny her anything, therefore her death completely unmanued him; for weeks he lay on the bed of sickness, which he only left to become the inmate of a private mad-house, where he died a year or two after.

Colenel Stracy, finding Horace thus conpletely thrown on him for support, determined to act towards the boy in every respect us parent, if, he merited such kindness: for which reason he had removed him from school, s soon as Egerton, and engaged a private tuter to prepare them both for college. He did not at first contemplate incurring so great an expense, but Horace evinced so much talent, and gained so considerably upon the kindness of his benefactor, that the General—for he had attained that rank—thought it but justice w give him every opportunity for improvement Perhaps we might add also, as another reason for this proceeding, that his friend wished w be considered unsparing in his liberality.

Thus it was, however, that young Tulk's college expenses were defrayed; and, after taking honours, he returned to his patrons, and became the preceptor of Algernon, the General's only son by his second lady. In this situation, he continued to enjoy the smiles of prosperity, while his friend Egerton rambled over the Continent, whence he had returned but a short time before his family's adjournment to High-field, whither he had accompanied them, "Because," he said, while he surveyed himself complacently in a large pier glass, "the the

London in July was only fit for such unfornate mortals as possessed neither liver, nor mplexions to be injured by the extreme at;" forgetting, as he spoke, that, in the iss then under his contemptuous censure, he ist include his father, whose eye, as it met it of his son, instantly recalled him to a use of their impropriety.

Let it not, however, be inferred, from this aple, that Lord Stracy was a selfish, or urtless character. No: his faults arose m his extreme volatility, for he possessed noble and warm a heart as could be Early indulgence had fostered ny weeds, which ought to have been eraated; and parental severity, exerted too e in life, only tended to aggravate the ors of an impetuous, thoughtless youth, ose heart was keenly alive to good and evil Egerton's was a spirit on which rcion could effect only evil, while kinds was ever powerful in weaning him from More of his character we will not elop, as we judge it infinitely more amuz to unravel a mystery by degrees, than to told the ungarnished truth.

Iorace Tulk, on the contrary, was of a ve, silent disposition; studious by habit

and education, yet able to comprehend participate in the gaiety of his friend whom he was deservedly a favourite. The however, blind to his faults, for he frequently reproved him, and, by pointing out their commission, induced Lord Stracy to forego, remodel, or palliate his conduct; while in his pupil, Algernon, he had the pleasure of seeing a type of his own disposition, enlivened by the gaiety natural to a boy of fifteen.

We must now rejoin our pedestrian party, which reached the south plantation, where they were joined by Mr. Prior, according to the Earl's desire. Lady Trefoil, and Lady Clara, having announced their intention of returning to the house with the little girls. Horace proposed to accompany them; leaving the Earl, with his sons, to fathom the mysteries of the farming establishment.

For some time Lord Stracy paid little attention to his father's conversation, while be reclined on a bench, listening to Algernon's merry remarks; but when he heard Mr. Prior begin to detail the condition of the neighbourhood, and to give the names of the owners of the different estates in the vicinity, be drew near his father, and while he slowly paced to and fro, with his brother on his arm, be

Istened to the account; now and smiling significantly at Algernon, as any particularly amused him.

And pray, Prior," said the Earl, "does d Augustus Conway visit much here?"

'Oh! yes my lord; he is the life of the mtry, and goes everywhere; he is a great purite round here, for he is happy to ive every one at his house, and never ses to dine with any one."

Lord Augustus to a T," said Stracy in a tone to his brother. "Good feeding, I suppose, or he would not be so lescending."

I am glad to hear he is so popular," the Earl; "I knew him when in Devone;" then, turning to his son, he contil, "we must pay his lordship a visit in w days, Stracy."

With a dinner invitation in your pocket, I hope," returned he, laughing.

I wish you would learn to be more dist, Egerton," said the Earl with a frown; , resuming his interrogatives, he said, ave any of the estates here lately iged owners? Who has the Retreat?" Not within two or three years, my lord. Retreat belongs to a widow lady, named wn; and that old place beyond the vil-

- lage. Brookside, was bought five years: a
- Han! ejaculated the Earl: Beresson, what Beressord, of the Adamant?"
- "I never heard what vessel he served in, my lord: but I believe the Captain has been much in the East. He has a deep scar down his face, my lord." aided the servant, anxious to assist his master in proving the identity of the person he spoke of.
- "The same, without a doubt," replied the Earl: "pray, has he a family?"
- "One son only, my lord; but his sisters two daughters are with him. The eldest, Miss Murray, is considered very beautiful; but, as the young ladies seldom go out, except to church, or to visit the sick cottagers, very little is known of them. I have heard it said their uncle is extremely jealous of their leaving him, as they have no mother."
- "By Jove, Algernon," said Stracy, "Miss Murray must be the 'Unknown.' I am determined," said he, in a low tone, "to ascertain it."
- "Pray, is not the place you call Brooksit," inquired he, addressing Mr. Prior, in his not affected tone, "that handsome place on the hill, about a mile from the park gate?"

lord. Has your lordship seen

tht sight of it this morning, the park is fine."

ing like what we have here, the plantations are kept in

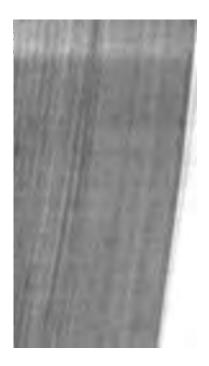
in is particular, then?"

ord; but Miss Murray interests nuch in the embellishment of and is often out very early in with her favourite dog."

answered the young nobleman, stling as he drew his brother ench again, leaving his father liscussion he had interrupted,

"I knew I could draw the non," he continued, with a as they were out of ear-shot to was rather deaf; "I thought my father off the scent, by the timber. Ha, ha, it is really I to find a nunnery here. Miss, too! well I am satisfied with work. The devil is in it, or I s to subdue the Cerberus that I wonder where Horace is all

mother and Clara, to be sure,



عندت عد -de. 14 THE BE, I decieve b عن عبد tie world ie is dismi -1 sisi the E spri to por an Ear poorp Prior, he u iide." - Wau: a

Stract.

- Ob . TOR 1 kelos se. .. By no mea

sues, - we have

"Down by the bridge," replied the other, Quickly, "we then shall be on our way to the village."

"Come," said their father, who, not having caught their words, thought they could not agree, "Come, Algernon, I am sure I may claim your attendance. Let Stracy go his own way."

"I am at your service, sir," said his eldest son, starting to his side.

Lord Trefoil said, "No, no, Egerton, follow your own amusement, I will take Algernon with me."

"Oh! very well, my lord," replied Stracy, with assumed carelessness, as he made way for the favourite to take his father's arm. "It is as you please, certainly. I will be where you appointed, Algernon," he added, to his brother, who merely nodded assent, as he and his father walked away.

"It is fortunate I have a younger brother," murmured Stracy, ironically, as he watched his retreating parent an instant, before he struck into an opposite avenue. "So I am to amuse myself; that suggestion shall not be disregarded:" and away he went, singing, "I care for nobody, no, not I, if nobody cares for me."

CHAPTER IV.

A merrier man, Within the limit of becoming mirth, I never spent an hour's talk withal. His eye begets occasion for his wit; For every object that the one doth eatch The other turns to a mirth-moving jest.

SHAKSPEARE.

LORD STRACY had, unfortunately, imbibed an idea, engendered by his father's severity towards his follies, of a preference for his younger son. An idea perhaps not unfounded, for Algernon was a younger child, in the extreme acceptation of the term; and, had it not been for the invariable kindness, and judicious care, of the Countess, the harmony of the two families might not have been so strictly preserved.

Algernon had never been from home, and had wound himself round his father's heart by a blind submission to a will ever despotic;

ile Stracy, feeling, after his return from atinental scenes, his father still less willing overlook his faults, attributed it to a growpartiality to his brother, and allowed lousy to creep into his heart. Such, howr, was the generosity of his nature that, ess some extraordinary expression of the i's feeling arrested his attention, he never alt upon the subject; preferring rather to re away care by gaiety, than to increase his culties by fancy. Towards Algernon, also, intertained, in common with the rest of the ily, that affection which so highly gratified excellent Countess; and which was a conit check upon any serious disagreement veen the brothers.

restored good humour, within five minutes r his transient vexation, he reached the almost deserted dog-kennel, where he ped to note the various canine accommons, as he had several favourite animals h, for the present, were domiciliated in enshire, until there was time to learn the shility of their being received at Highfield. The found the principal gamekeeper; and ll hour had elapsed, in the discussion of of his favourite topics, ere he recollected promise to Algernon. When he did so,

however, he quickly took leave of Dickson though not without an assurance of futur return, and then hastened towards the ap pointed rendezvous. But Egerton was one of those who frequently are a long time befor reaching the point for which they set out, and in the present instance, ere he had accomplished half the distance, his attention was attracted by a beautiful white marble column placed beneath the shadow of a large cedar a Lebanon. It was close to the bank of the lake, and stood upon a gentle slope, so explosomed in verdure that it was entirely concealed, until he was within a few paces.

What use could such an object be," though Egerton, "in so isolated, so secluded, a situation; and he almost unconsciously looked around to discover whether any bird's eye view of the mansion could be obtained, but no! it was completely shut in by trees, except on one side, where the lake expanded into a broad sheet of sparkling lustre. Again he looked at the unexpected object, and opening a little gate in the light ornamental fence, which enclosed the sacred spot, he stood upon the short velocity, whence the column rose by a few steps. Roses and woodbine twined around its light or pedestal, and, on the side next the water.

peared an inscription, which Lord Stracy mediately applied himself to decipher. It as follows:—

TO THE MEMORY

OP

REGINALD, LORD STRACY,

Who was accidentally drowned near this spot, on the 16th of August 17—, this monument is erected by his sorrowing parents.

In life he was justly beloved, and in death sincerely lamented.

Sole Scion from the parent stem; To thee the lot was given To bud alone, below on earth, Before thy flight to heaven.

For those few short, though blissful, days, Which God by thee conferred, Thy weeping friends here join in praise, And humbly thank the Lord.

In youth cut off by sudden death; And summoned to the skies, May we not hope, in faith and love, That thou with saints will rise?

O yes, we'll trust, that when the trump— The awful trump, shall sound; In company with spirits pure, Thou wilt with Christ be found!

So it was here," said Egerton, mentally, eturned and gazed upon the lake, after an ant's pause; wherein an indefinable senon of mingled surprise and pity actuated

him." that my poor cousin met with his said—what a distracted theatre has not this area formed! when my unfortunate aum uncle have bent in agony over the little bute they themselves raised, in evident their pure, unsulfied affection for a favo son!"

Again he turned, and thoughtfully pluck rose, which blossomed there "unseen," un to account for the feeling which had da his high flow of spirits.

"Why, Stracy," exclaimed the cheerful vof his brother, who ran hastily up to what are you doing here? A pretty fe you are to keep an appointment; there has been kicking my heels down yonder a hour, while you are—"

"Doing the sentimental, you would say, be answered Stracy, as his countenance results wonted animation,—"and perhaps you right. I quite forgot you, when I unexpect came upon this object. See here, Horace, continued, to his friend, who followed Alger at a more sober pace, "here is the very the to please you—pretty idea, is it not?"

"An affectionate one, also," returned To after having read the inscription. "Poorb his vital thread was early snapped. Is y are of the existence of this stone,

cy not, for he has not pointed it out il episode to the erroneous inheritor tle, which would undoubtedly have case. Upon my word, I think it a ;ant affair, but wish it had been in a antageous situation."

pears to me most appropriately situswered Horace. "Neither fame, nor feeling of any kind, prompted this of affection, and the flower, nipped in is as sincerely mourned by the silent y the loud wail of despair."

! Horace, you and I never agree; so lease, we will leave 'The Stracys' promotion' to its intended solitude." will have some trouble in turning that ital stone to that account, Egerton," rother, laughing.

so difficult as you suppose, seeing I way up already, while you are still at m, Gerny."

re, I hope, I shall always remain, r I must make you my stepping-stone." k you for that, boy,—but look at our rave countenance, he disapproves our

. Come, Horace, banish that frown,

you should let my words rebound from your tympanum, like a ball from off a wall."

"In general I do, Stracy, but I hate to hear you encouraging Algernon to be as apparently indiscreet as yourself."

"It is very wrong, to be sure," said the young lord, with feigned contrition, at the same time placing his arm within that of Tulk, "but you know, Tulk, what poor, weak mortals we are—and how our best endeavours have, sometimes, the most contrary effect; now, I intended to point out the instability of worldly greatness to your pupil, as exemplified by that column; but it seems you keep all Mentorian privileges to yourself; and, in the name of all the saints, I wish you joy of your office. By the way, I think you had always an inkling for reclaiming the erroneous, for when we were at school, if I recollect right, you once read the dominie a severe lecture on the cruelty of infantine flagellations, when you were under condemnation yourself, for giving one of your companions a black eve."

His friend listened to the moralizing commencement of this speech with surprise, but when he observed the lurking smile on Stracy's countenance as he proceeded, his own features gradually relaxed; and he said with a laugh, rton, you are incorrigible; but I suppose will say I have provoked your satire as I did my punishment then—"

"The man that is truly wise, indeed, Can gather honey from a weed,"

the merry Lord Stracy. "But let us our way to the village, Tulk. Reer, Algernon, you must not play any to-day, since it is our first appearance; the natives, and favourable impressions ery thing; so no larking, if you please." o, no, Stracy," replied his brother; "I eave all that sort of thing alone, until link proper to 'shew me the way I should With you for my guide, I know what I xpect."

eware of the hint I gave you this mornanswered the other.

nough he felt his brother was in jest, non edged away, as if by instinct, and rty pursued the road to Highfield, where assed a pleasant hour, in rambling over d unknown to them.

y, alas! should the ardour and zest of be extinguished by the calculations of Must we ever resign the delightful scence of existence, in proportion as we ob. II.

journey on through the vale of years? Such indeed, has been the natural change since the world began, and such it will be to the end of time; and we therefore must believe that 'whatever is, is right.'

END OF VOL. 11.

MORTIMER DELMAR;

AND

IGHFIELD TOWER.

TALES

BY THE

JUTHOR OF "CONRAD BLESSINGTON."

Whoever thinks a faultiess piece to see,
Thinks what ne'er was, nor is, nor e'er shall be:
In every work regard the writer's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend:
And, if the means be just, the conduct true,
Applause, in spite of trivial faults, is due.

POPE

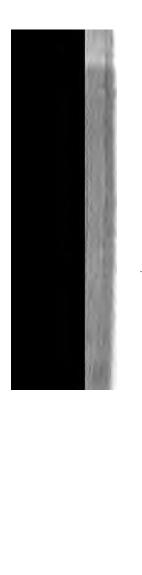
IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON

UNDERS AND OTLEY, CONDUIT STREET.

1838.



HIGHFIELD TOWER.

CHAPTER V.

Ah! who among us all

Could say he had not err'd as much and more!

He meets me with hard glazed eyes!

He quits me—spurns me—with disdain.

CRABBE.

It was early in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and —, that a young and interesting looking girl, about eighteen, was sitting in silent meditation, at the bedside of her invalid parent; who appeared to have fallen into troubled slumber, for his breathing was difficult, while an occasional moan burst from his lips. The intermitting flame from the grate was insufficient to dispel the gloomy obscurity which reigned in the chamber, in consequence of the vol. III.

partially closed shutters; adding, if possible, to the melancholy which oppressed her.

Resting her head upon her hand, the your marse allowed the large tear of sorrow to roll marestrained down her cheek, as her eyes rested on the pale, sunken features of the invalid; and, more than once, when he started convulsively, her ready hand sought the medicine, wherewith to mitigate the pang, which was placed on a small table beside her; but her precautions were mealed for. Still be slumbered, and still she watered for some time longer undisturbed, until a well known knock at the street door aroused both; when he said, in a voice so feeble, that it required the deepest attention to catch the words,

" Margaret, is Robert yet arrived?"

"No. dearest father," replied she, tenderly, as she straighted to overcome her recently induged article, "there has not yet been time for his journey, it was Doctor Green whose knock you heard. I hope he will be able to prescribe something to give you ease."

"No. my dear child, hope is now past. I fed my death is at hand. But weep not, Margaret," he continued, as his daughter imprinted a convalsive kiss upon his hand, "you will find a protector in Robert, to whose care I shall conmit you."

The entrance of the medical attendant with the nurse, here interrupted the dying man, who said.

'You are good to call in again, Doctor, after our announcement of this morning. I know his night will end my pain."

"I trust, my dear Mr. Bentham." answered to physician, "I shall be able to administer the little opiate, to relieve the uneasiness I find to have endured the last few hours."

"Turn your thoughts to the case of my poor rl, doctor," urged Mr. Bentham, "she is quite orn out. Can you not persuade her to take me rest?"

"Oh! no, dear father, I will not leave you.
o not ask me, Doctor Green; only tell me what
must do for my father, and I shall not think
out myself."

"My dear Miss Bentham," answered the son Esculapius, in a low tone, as he drew the seping Margaret into the adjoining room; "let entreat you to calm your spirits, and arm sur mind with fortitude, to meet an event which set soon occur; this has long been anticipated, ough it appears sudden to us now, and your ther is prepared, I hope, to depart."

The mourner shook her head in silent grief, id, for some minutes, her kind friend continued pour such consolations into her ear as the use demanded and his own benevolent dispotion suggested; with, however, but indifferent uccess, for fatigue and sorrow had totally become the feelings of Miss Bentham.

ATT THE PERSON NAMED IN

i ku liiss sut akki groot lii kuks, lui her stery in its whose pre randsed to resign her. acali retier the proffer trans unavailable. Fine alit of immediate service t a littrice, or to his patie ris leave, after giving ev aurse for the treatment of tam, and Margaret resu tatter's led-side.

Litas aut do Ki

Some livers passed he 12:19 418 L3 intimation sere et wiem Mr. Benti than once. His anxiety gr the term of his existence eduta, towards nine o'cl spronored his daughter b aug lesace bir. listened, i is to suite

He will be your protector, my child, I re, though your dear mother used often to by blind idolatry of him would be ill rel. In my will I have provided but modefor you, for his gay habits have drawn by on my means, though I trust enough ns for you both."

th! dearest father, talk not so," returned his iter, as the tears streamed down her cheek. innot lose you; indeed—indeed, I will not id on Robert for an instant, he——" She ited; and then continued, "no, let me go octor Green; he has offered me a home."

Vell! Margaret," said Mr. Bentham, still faintly, "I do not understand your feelings is subject. I hope you will not find your er's guardianship so disagreeable as you, but I cannot alter it now. May God bless my love! I can say no more; I have done r the best."

Sut I have another brother," said his daughimidly.

Name him not, Margaret, he was my son, ic is disinherited. You shall not be placed care; so think of him no more."

rgaret silently pressed her father's hand, for some minutes, continued to sob bitterly; Mr. Bentham gazed upon her with an eye ve and pity.

e attention of both was aroused by a hasty

knock at the house door, and again Mr. Beham's hopes of seeing his son revived, although the agitation he experienced, in consequence entirely deprived him of the power of speech. An interval of some minutes elapsed, ere a genth tap summoned Margaret to the door, who said, as she quitted her parent's side, "Dearest father, do not be uneasy; should this be Robert, I will bring him to you immediately. Nurse will not leave you." With these words she passed out upon the landing, where stood the old manservant, who had faithfully served Mr. Bentham since his marriage.

"Oh! Miss Margaret," he said, as the tears stood in his eyes, and he placed a card in her hand. "Your brother, Mr. Lorrimer, entreats so earnestly to see my master, that I could not refuse to let you know he is here."

"I dare not tell my father, Reynolds," returned Miss Bentham, dejectedly, "he has just forbidden me to speak, or think, of Mr. Lorrimer; yea must tell him it will be better for him to go away again."

"Will you not see him yourself, Miss?" replied Reynolds, in a persuasive tone. "Mr. Lorrimer will not be content with my refund. Indeed I have not the heart to shut the deer against him. Do, Miss Margaret, see him."

"I cannot go down, Reynolds, it is impossible my father may want me now."

"I will send him here then, Miss; you can missy him better in one minute than I can in wif an hour."

Miss Bentham bent her head in acquiescence this proposal, and the servant having placed the candle upon the stairs, hastily retired to pprise the apparently unwelcome visiter of the andience he had procured for him.

Margaret listened in breathless suspense for the approaching footstep; but so cautious was the tread that the intruder had already mounted the stairs half way, ere she discovered his roximity. Not a word was uttered on either ide—the brother and sister met; but as they tood side by side, their hands clasped together, the name of father passed the lips of Lorrimor lentham; while he regarded his companion with intense anxiety. "He cannot live many wours," returned she, endeavouring in vain to uppress her tears."

"But may I not once more hear a parent's voice?" answered the young man, in a tone of supplication. "Only tell him I am here, Margaret, and let his own feelings decide my fate."

His sister shook her head mournfully, as she said "He will not even hear you mentioned, Lorimer; how unfortunate is your arrival!"

"I will not believe it so, for he must forgive me on his death-bed, Margaret."

"Happy would it be for himself if he could,

but I will try and introduce your name, if possible, Lorrimer. You must, doubtless, require some refreshment; wait down stairs, and Reynolds will attend you."

She moved to re-enter the sick chamber, and her brother said.

"Margaret, forgive me! but I cannot forget that I have violated my father's orders, by invading his house. As I am not here by his permission, it does not accord with my feelings to make an unnecessary demand upon his hospitality. I am only here on sufferance."

"Oh! Lorrimer," returned she, "do not speak so painfully. I trust my father will listen to reason. I will do my utmost for you, be assured; pray go down, your voice may be recognized."

Placing his back against the balustrade by Mr. Bentham's door, Lorrimer said, in a determined tone,

"I will not move, Margaret, until I obtain your answer."

Upon finding him thus determined, Margaret yielded, and quitted him; and Mr. Bentham immediately pronounced the name of his some Robert, in a voice of inquiry.

"No, my own dear father," answered his daughter, as she bent over him, and tenderly wiped away the dews of death; which already overspread his forehead; "it is another very

riend; who entreats to see you; one, I am aded, you will equally benefit, and derive ness from meeting."

old man made no answer, though it was he comprehended Margaret's meaning; as ted not for an explanation, and, after an t's pause, she continued: "May I call her in?"

ertainly not, Margaret," answered her; "did I not tell you I would not listen thing in his behalf? I have disinherited

cue, dear father, but I could not resist his cations, to try and obtain a moment's ew with a father—a father he still adores; llarly, when I thought how severely I be affected, if I were myself under the sure of a beloved parent; for my sake, rrimer, father."

ell! if you like, my child," rejoined the reluctantly, evidently won into commore by the wish of gratifying his ter, and silencing her remonstrances, than sense of justice or renewed affection for ; for he added, in a peevish tone, "Oh! Robert would come." This oft repeated was unheard by Margaret, who hastened eve her brother from his uncertainty; and ign, communicated the successful termiof her commission.

With a blanched cheek and faltering step, young Bentham entered the apartment; when Margaret whispered: "Be cool, and prudent," as she took his hand, and drawing him to the bed, placed it in that of their parent. But the tears trickled tast down her fair cheek, as she observed Mr. Bentham's cold, averted eve.

Agntation for an instant overpowered Lorrimer, for when last he parted from his tather it was at a mement of mutual indignation; and he paintally felt the awful change that was the cause of their present re-union; but he quickly regarded his self-possession, when his father stiff in a tremulous voice, "Lorrimer Bentham, you have to thank Margaret for your admission to-tight. I thought we had parted for every What have you to say, which can call for this unwelcome visit!"

"Father," said the son, dropping on one knee, at the bed-side, and withdrawing his hand from the position in which it had so kindly been placed by his sister, "Father, I came to see for tergiveness, and a blessing!"

"I have none to bestow," returned Mr. Bestham, coldly; "you once had your option of mine, or another's love; and you made your selection. I trust you have found it a wise one, for we must all drink from the cup of life, according as we ourselves drug it."

" I do not arraign heaven's decrees," "

Mied Lorrimer, sadly, without taking notice of the bitter tone of irony, in which Mr. Bentham spoke. "Whatever be my fate, I shall submit, I hope, with patience; but it would smooth my path to know that my father did not spurn me from him. During the long years of our estrangement, have you not learnt to think less harshly of a son, who now implores you, in the name of his sainted mother, your once adored wife, to banish your displeasure?"

"Lorrimer," replied Mr. Bentham, in the low tremulous accent of passion: "attempt not to move me, I have steeled my heart against you; therefore it is useless to endeavour to soften me. Yet I do not part from you in anger, here is my hand, and that must satisfy you; for, unless our brother see fit to remember you, not a expence of my money will be yours."

"I shall not trouble either him, or you, sir, that score," returned the son, rising somehat proudly. "I did not come here with ercenary views; but, since I find you as obrate as you were eight years ago, I will not croach further on your patience. May God, his infinite goodness, judge you with less verity than you have shewn to your eldest n." He turned to the door, and Margaret puld have taken his hand, but he passed her ruptly, without speaking; and her father's ddenly increased faintness prevented her fol-

lowing Lorrimer for some minutes. When she did so, however, he was standing against a piller in the entrance hall, evidently in deep distress; for his whole frame trembled, and his lips quivered in silent grief. On the ground beside him lay his hat, and a disregarded decanter of wine was on a table near. "Dear Lorrimer," said she, kindly, "you may, perhaps, think my offer of consolation at this moment a mockery, but I am greatly pained at your reception. Will you not come into the library, that I may soothe, though I cannot avert, my father's resolution?"

"I thank you for your sympathy," he answered coldly; "but these are wounds too deep to be healed; this house is no resting-place for me now."

"Yet, stay an instant; tell me what caused you to make this unfortunate visit? where you are going to; and when I may see you again? You are, Lorrimer, almost my only friend, beside my father, and I must not lose sight of you entirely. Be quick, or I shall be called away."

"Your questions may be soon answerd," returned he, struggling to recover himself, so he reluctantly followed her into the room. "I have come direct from Portsmouth, where I have night heard your father was so seriously in hopes of—his pardon. I have failed—his has not cursed me quite, but—however, that is part In reply to your other demands, I can only sy

that I serve my king and country; and my course is as uncertain as the ocean on which I live.—But what is to become of you, Margaret, when your duties here are fulfilled? "—in his turn becoming the inquisitor.

"Robert is to be my guardian," answered she sorrowfully.

"Hah! indeed,-are you sure?"

"My father told me so to-night, but I do not like it, Lorrimer—you should be my protector."

"Impossible, my poor little sister, I am an outcast from my home!"—Bitterly he spoke, and a painful pause ensued; which he broke by mying, as a footstep was heard approaching the door. "You are wanted, I suppose, and I will go mow—May heaven bless you, and your father!—If I can be of service to you at any time, remember I am your brother."

"Most truly I believe it, Lorrimer, but where hall I find you? At Portsmouth?"

"This friend, Margaret," rejoined he, at the same time, hastily tracing a few words on a card, "will always know my direction, so long as I and he are sojourners in this world; and now farewell!"—A truly fraternal embrace succeeded, and they parted in the hall where Reynolds stood.

"Mr. Lorrimer has not taken any thing," said the old man to his mistress—" I tried to persuade him to take some wine."

"You were as kind and attentive as ever, my

11

old friend," responded young Bentham, shating the favourite domestic by the hand, and I than you for it, but I cannot accept any refreshment here—had it been otherwise, indeed—but—"

" Is my master still unrelenting, sir?" enquired Reywolds.

"I grieve to say he is—may God forgive him."
These were the last words of the disappointed son, as his father's door closed on him for everand deep and heartfelt was the sigh which Repnolds heaved, as he raised his candle and the disregarded decanter, and slowly took his way back to the servants hall. Again the house resumed its wonted stillness; Miss Bentham the returned to the sick couch of her father, who had sunk into a stupor, from which he never awake, but passed from that quiescent state into eternity, without a struggle, at an early hour on the following morning.

Within a few hours after this mournful event, and while Margaret was in deep and uncontrolled grici. a post-chaise and four rattled through the quie: village, in which it had taken place, and stopped at the residence of the late Francis Beatham. A young man instantly sprang out; but, on casting his eyes to the windows, his contenance grew pale, and for a moment he staggers, when he observed the shutters were half closely however, he recovered himself, sufficiently: push aside the iron gate; and, before he could

Sain the door, it was opened by Reynolds, whose and countenance but too plainly confirmed the satal truth.

Walking forward into the library, from which his brother had so recently retreated, he threw himself into a chair, saying to Reynolds, who followed him, "Get me the brandy, and inform your mistress of my arrival."

The old man was about to speak—but, Mr. Robert, for it was no other than the long expected visiter, with a frown, and an impatient wave of the hand, motioned him to begone, which order was promptly obeyed. No sooner was the refreshment, which he had called for, brought, than he swallowed an ample glass-full, notwithstanding it was yet early in the day; after which, he again said, in a tone of high command,

"You will ask Miss Margaret if she have anything to say to me, Reynolds, and dismiss the chaise and horses, for I stay here to-night," and then, in slow and measured steps, he paced up and down the room, while the servant retired to execute the commissions with which he was catrusted.

Margaret, however, was not able to compose lerself sufficiently to quit her chamber, or even collect her thoughts,—being likewise in bed, or the first time for several days and nights, she egged to defer seeing him until the evening.

A slight smile curled Robert's lip, a ceived this intimation, but he expressed ingness to wait Margaret's own time, a ceeded to attend to several matters w manded his care.

We, in the mean time, will submit sketch of the previous career of the I family, to our readers.

CHAPTER VI.

But soon, a witness to their vows, I saw The maiden his, if not by love, by law, The bells proclaim'd it-merry call'd by those Who have no foresight of their neighbours' woes. CRABBE.

was in the summer of 17—, that a wealthy culturist of the name of Bentham led the ag and portionless Isabella Stanhope to the eneal altar: he had become suddenly deeply noured of her perfections, while on a sporting y at the house of a friend, where she was a visiter: and, with a natural impatience of racter, he pressed his suit forward.

he opportunity of a permanent settlement an unprotected orphan was too advantageous e disregarded, and, although Miss Stanhope tated at first, in accepting the offer he soon e her, she was eventually induced to comply his solicitations, from the representations

of her uncle, who would not attend to any dou or difficulties on the part of his young relat Mr. Bentham was not, indeed, a person to at the affections of a youthful female, for his man were unpolished—his appearance vulgarpursuits purely those of the field—Still, from moment she made up her mind to become the v of this gentleman, she endeavoured to close eyes to his imperfections, and, with a few ter only, sealed her fate on earth.

The newly-married couple were speedily dom ciliated at their own residence, where, in the course of a few months, Mrs. Bentham becam fully conscious of the unfortunate decision of he friends; for her husband resumed all the evi habits to which he had ever been addicted, and neglected her, for the chase and the society of grooms and horse-jockeys.—Notwithstanding this conduct, young Bentham really loved his wife, as much as he could love anything—that is to say, she ranked next to his dogs and horses, and he behaved to her with kindness, at those times when he vouchsafed her his company. She was a woman of strong mind, and excellent principles, and she soon learnt how to manage his temper, which was most violent, by a ready obedience to his will, thus promoting the happiness of each. She possessed many resources within herself, and the implicit confidence reposed in her by her husband, in all matters relating to his afwhether Mrs. Bentham would not have ad herself happy.

y should she not be deemed so? It is could not boast of any tender affection rt of her consort, any congeniality of eeling; but she was well assured of his d comparative attention, united to the of health and competence.

nanner passed several years, unmarked traordinary event; placidity and consoothed the atmosphere of Mrs. Benistence; while a gradual increase of his favourite pursuits marked the her husband.

hildren had been the fruit of this illnarriage, who formed the principal their mother: although the manner in r father taught his boys to follow his at times, deeply pained her; but she the discipline of school, united to a atchfulness on her part, would be sufifluential to moderate, if they could not the effect of his baneful influence.



practice! Mrs. Bentham saw, with anguish, that each succeeding vacation added to the danger of her sons, as they became more capable of being Mr. Bentham's companions; and, although she had never known her husband inculcate sentiments of disrespect for her, in the breasts of her children, yet she dared not oppose him, for few such a feeling might arise in their minds, from the utter disregard with which she knew her remonstrances would be treated.

This amiable woman, however, did not live to witness the consummation of any part of her anxiety, for a rapid and malignant disorder terminated her career, during one of Mr. Bentham's frequent absences; when Lorrimer, their eldestchild, was twelve years of age. She had not even the consolation of recommending her tender family to his parental care, as the spark of life had fed, ere the return of the messenger who had been dispatched to apprise him of her danger: and her beloved boy was the only witness of her premature death, independent of the servant attacked to her person. With the tenacity of one who felt how soon she should be deprived of the power of beholding a cherished object, Mrs. Benthan retained Lorrimer at her bed-side, and, while lavished the tenderest caresses upon him. communicated such advice for his future conduct she thought the child could comprehend.

The sobbing boy promised with readiness to

to all, though his poignant grief scarcely ed him to articulate; and, placing his arms his mother's neck, while he kissed her then cold with approaching dissolution. his seal to her love, and his obedience. 1, and for a time Mr. Bentham was overd with grief, which every moment was inby the constant demands that were made tround him on subjects of business. rse of some months, however, having enorrimer, according to his own wish, on a man of war-placed his daughter at in the country town—and taken a person house to superintend his domestic affairs. in to regain his spirits, though it was not me time after that he was again the same l-the first in the chase, or the most jovial ward of his neighbours.

ept his youngest boy constantly with him, utter disregard of his education and mond, could the fond mother have seen her ohert, at twelve years of age, the particinal the follies of his father's maturer could she have seen him drink his bottle, a Bacchanalian chorus with all the ardourth; deeply, aye most deeply, would she ourned his temporal and eternal danger, ain, however, it was not her fate to endure, ure death had snatched her away from the s and distresses of the world.

 $(1.441 \pm 3.4) \pm 2.4 \pm 4.4$ Calledon Comment afficient and society way, the me to the call Sie had er his wife. A reign greatly fail acheed M in a lituat one, so Year steerill, must more is to his other was lassakin :-no assion the name of die red wem an :-she of tien, and, by her g versally hated by all. upper real to a lolize he

By her means, Fann thely at school for sev little girl, who was be after her marriage, u Benth has eldest daug their tather.

an aversion, in consequence of the suspithe had entertained, and perhaps somewhat
shly and imprudently expressed to his farespecting her, during his temporary visits
thome, for some years after Mr. Bentham's
age. Often would he regret, when he saw
such his father was displeased by his cold
ity to his step-mother,—bitterly regret
edid not possess the dissimulation of his
r Robert, who, with equal hatred for Mrs.
am, contrived to appear agreeable to all
necedings.

it was not in Lorrimer's nature to disguise lings-possessed of an open, generous disn, he could ill brook the slights that his d sister had to endure: and it was entirely to his remonstrances and entreaties that turned to the paternal mansion at the age hteen. When Lorrimer revisited England after, he found Fanny on the eve of marwith a young man of Mrs. Bentham's selecwho was perfectly obnoxious to her; and, affectionate brother, anxious to promote ppiness, he endeavoured to influence their in her favour, but in vain! He was so comv under the dominion of his wife that exation only produced re-crimination, in the of which, Lorrimer so greatly incensed ther by an ill-judged, though veracious, exe of Mrs. Bentham's tyranny, that the old man, in a rage, struck his son; bidding him quit the house instantly.

This severity the high-spirited youth could not bear—the blow cooled him in a moment; and, telling his father, with unnatural composure, that he was ready to act in perfect obedience to his commands, and, for his own sake, would never return home, while his step-mother presided there—he took a hasty leave of his brother and sister, and departed.

The vindictive rage of Mr. Bentham led him shortly to crase the name of his eldest son from his will, which fact was communicated to him, with the sincerest sorrow, by Fanny, a couple of years after, when they met at Madras.

The short and unfortunate tale of this poor girl may be here summed up in a few words: forced by her step-mother, after her brother's dismissal, into an union with a man for whom she neither entertained affection nor esteem; one also whose conduct towards her in India, whither he returned immediately on his marriage—was unkind in the extreme; the few short years of her life were sown with the seeds of pain and sorrow.

Lorrimer's occasional visits, while he was on the East India station, did indeed shed a glean of joy around her thorny path; but even this consolation was denied her, some months before her death, as her husband sent her up the country, with the view of restoring her health, though Was every reason to believe it was only it might have a freer scope for his own laties. Be that as it may, however, true it it she died in a foreign land, at a distance very friend.

le active profession young Bentham had he tried to forget the pangs he had felt; rs elapsed without his having any inclio return to the paternal roof; for, though entham was carried off the stage of life a few years from the period of her fatal over Fanny, he was too high-spirited to admittance at his father's door. During rent visits to England, he frequently saw ther Robert, who continued to be a fawith his father; although, by his folly ravagance, he caused him great and freouble, as indulgence and bad habits had ely spoilt him. In fact, the boy who had d with fox-hunters, before entering his as far too intimately acquainted with the the turf and the gaming-table at fiventy.

abits of the brothers were so widely difiat, beyond the interchange of common and the cultivation of mutual good-will, ection appeared to exist between them. laughter only was the fruit of Mr. Bensecond marriage, for whom Lorrimer and had entertained the most opposite sentiii.



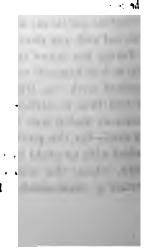
ever re her mo: he left complete subseque and rene slumberec was agaii health, the to enter in Robert's la obliged bim as his illne land, to spar it. He then tion, which h by the cares distant period deceitful Robe from his expec property; when able to live in had hithan

arrival, the reader is already informed, and remains with us, before proceeding, to slight sketch of Margaret—our principal ie.

judge from her parents, we might suppose ything but agreeable—though we may often ildren exactly opposite to the authors of peing, whether for good, or for evil. Marstrongly exemplified this remark, being a f mild, gentle, disposition, whose mind, for e, was richly stored with information; and ilents highly polished by the almost maattention of an excellent woman, who indertaken the office of her instructress an early age, at the request of Mr. Benwho did not think his wife in any way ied to direct their child's education, however I she might be in directing him and his hold.

sessed of a mind anxious for information, aret had sought, even in childhood, to gain ledge from her eldest brother, to whom she red herself by her uniform sweetness of sition. In her, Lorrimer felt he had an adwith her mother and father, and it was his n to designate her, during infancy, "his nger of peace!" Often had she vainly sued s pardon, when her ripening years, and her r's death, gave her an augmented influence her father; while she bitterly deplored her

repeated failures, for Mr. Bentham became more obstinate as illness increased upon him, and some dawnings of remorse for his conduct gradually crept into his mind, of which he also failed to avail himself in the last moments of his existence, when he might have received his suppliant son to his arms.



. 1

HIGHFIRLD TOWER.

CHAPTER VII.

He was her all,
The only tie she had in the wide world,
And he was dead. They could not comfort her.

WILLIS

day passed away in the fulfilment of many es, Robert took his solitary meal towards clock, and had disposed himself by the fire he evening, when a light footstep sounded in hall: he listened—raised himself from his imbent position, and started up, as his sister. and sad, yet composed, entered the room. aking her hand to lead her to a seat, beside the had himself occupied, he just touched her head with his lips; but the salutation was cold that it struck chill to the heart of the mer: and it was some minutes ere she spoke. grief-for the past, and dread for the future. ed with twofold bitterness upon her wounded it, when she contrasted a parent's, and a ther's, treatment. But why dwell upon a

scene, which, to one party, at least, every burowing feeling must have been renewed;-why detail the pangs of a child, for the loss of the only friend the world appeared to have furnished to her; or why reveal the calmness, we had almost said indifference, with which a son received the account of a father's last moment, distressed as they were, by the non-attendance of one in whom his principal love had been, however unjustly, centred! But Robert Benthan's natural grief was so mixed up with the anticipation of the increase of property accruing to him, and the consequent independence he would erior, that the sincere sorrow of Margaret strangely contrasted with his manners, which could scarcely be said to denote aught but a forced deference and respect.

Serious indisposition, for several following days, prevented Margaret quitting her own apartment, during which, Robert and she did not meet: for he entirely absented himself from the house in the day, and returned late in the evening to sleep. Thus, Miss Bentham would have felt dreadfully lonely and neglected, had it not been for the kind attentions of Mrs. Green, who, with true friendly interest, had passed many hours each day with her afflicted young friend. On the evening, however, of the succeeding day to that of Mr. Bentham's funeral, Robert notation of miss custom, and

Immediately sent a servant to inform his sister that, if convenient, he would pay her a visit in her room, as he found she was not well enough to come down stairs; an offer to which she readily acceded, and prepared herself to receive him with as much cheerfulness as she could assume; for she felt that, however much her father had been mistaken in seeking to secure her happiness, by placing her fate in Robert's hands, it was yet her duty to do all in her power to conciliate her guardian. Little affection had ever subsisted between them, and the want of feeling he had betrayed on the demise of his father had not tended to heighten her sentiments of affection towards him. Still he was her brother, and she resolved not to give him any occasion to think she was dissatisfied with the office which had been delegated to him.

"My dear Margaret," he said, with unusual kindness, on entering the apartment, "I am sorry to intrude upon you earlier than may be convenient, but there are a few little arrangements I have to make, which require your concurrence; and I thought you would not object to see me, for the purpose of their discussion."

"You judge rightly, Robert," answered she, as she drew a chair towards the fire for him. "I am anxious to do any thing in my power which can be useful, indeed I am grieved that I have been incapacitated, by illness, from ad-

ministering to your comfort within the last level days; though I desired the servants to be very attentive, and I dare say they have been so."

"Oh! yes, yes," he returned, carelessly, "I have nothing to say on that head, we naturally expect attention in one's own house."

"Certainly," said Margaret, while her eyes filled with tears, at the allusions thus made, perhaps unintentionally, to the change that had taken place, and the transfer of property. A slight pause succeeded, which Miss Bentham curtailed, by adding, "you have something wask me, have you not, Robert?"

"Yes, I have to request your compliance with my plans for you," he said, abruptly: "you, doubtless, know that you are to be under my direction, until you are of age." His sister bent her head, and Robert went on, "now, my intention is to go on the continent, immediately after putting every thing in the hands of my man of business, in this country; I find our debts so heavy that, without a sale of every thing, it will be impossible to ast as I have judged right. Our property is very much smaller than I had any idea of, and my retrenchment abroad is the only chance I see of our recovering the shock which the liquidation of these debts will occasion to our affairs."

"And must I accompany you abroad?" will quired Margaret, in a tone of sorrow will supprise.

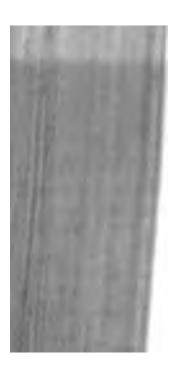


with real, or leighed, indecision, and, with much anxiety, said,—
ne, dear Robert, what you propose for a ready to adopt any suggestion of

lo not fear my opposition."

Margaret, I will not allow your firmercome mine; but I have a repugnance you, knowing how tenderly you have ight up by our poor father, who little its children would so soon have been estitute upon the world. Far be it, from me, to blame him; he loved us rly to deny us any thing that money us, and now we feel the consequence. to tell you, my poor sister, that you omething to gain your own livelihood." exclaimed Margaret, "I support myrt: what can I do?"

Margaret, must be answered by your-reat exertions I may be able to lay up re for you, by the time you are of age, esent you have no chance between d starvation." Astonishment had, at the source of Margaret's tears



com prove that codemically in pr

po conclude the procuration is pickly: "I feele "Leslade set,"

Morphor's regardence and affined since, which Robert for first of calling a cither could not, or district remarks, and affined trees. Robert, I he compaire: but I also is indeed trees, that is our father's will

continue to pursue."

ou are generous, Margaret, but I doubt it oud Lorrimer woul! subscribe to such a al. However, you are too young yet to thing in this matter, so do not think it. Perhaps you will think over what I aid, and to-morrow we will discuss the farther."

will, Robert, and you need not fear. I ield to necessity—I hope, in the morning, t you in the library."

ou may be sure I shall be most bappy to a there," he said, as he shook her affectly by the hand, at parting. A speech poured balm into the heart of his sister; tired to rest, with a full conviction that d always mistaken Robert's character. expected kindness had won the gratitude mourner, and she rejoiced in the change ttered herself had taken place in his conwards her. She felt she had won a friend, ere are many, I believe, who can tell the such an acquisition, after having been for

It is true. Margaret possessed a sincere well, waster in Mrs. Green; the lady of her lag. incher's paysician, who had been her governess; see she had no power to create her grief or hapnames heropi the moment; and Margaret was train deligated to find Robert so kindly disposed m her favour. This feeling, in a great degree, overered the startling intelligence of the altermed in their circumstances; winning her more easily to all her brother's propositions; and, ere size descretion to breakfast in the morning, she had resolved that, with his approbation, sine whether were services to any body who magic he willing to accept them, for the instruczwa ei citièren. "I am sure, dear Robert, I shall be able to teach young children," she said, " as some as I set pretty well again, if I can POLY RESERVE A SITUATION: for I am fond of SEDIT "

I is not doubt your capability, Margaret," ans wered her brother: " and if, after due configuration, and consultation with your friend Margaret, who will be able to advise you well, you should decode finally upon this course. I shall be most happy to accord with it, and further your verys by every means in my power. To-morrow, I am giving up to London for some days, and hope, at my return, to find your health much languages; as we must then think of your removing to some other temporary place of abole,

Equence of this determination, Margaret Dicated her prospects to Mrs. Green, who sooner made acquainted with existing Instances, than she pressed her young to accept an asylum in her house for a weeks, until she had recovered in some tree from her late severe shock, and steps mid be taken with advantage for the furtherace of the projected plan.

Robert Bentham readily advised his sister to lose with so valuable an offer, for he could not remise her his fraternal protection many days anger; and he owned he had been greatly perlexed how to dispose of her until a suitable ituation could be found for her. "He knew," a said, "in leaving her with Mrs. Green, he cured her comfort and advantage; for few tere better qualified than that lady to admister to a sorrowing spirit, or, when that spirit as soothed, to procure her the employment she intemplated.

Margaret also was perfectly satisfied with the rangement, and within a week she had taken her temporary residence at the house of her nd friend; and, her brother, at parting, had resented her with twenty guineas, desiring r, at the same time, to apply to him for any rther supply she might require for fitting reself out for her new life.

He also requested her to be his constant correspondent, and they parted; with a deep magression on her mind of his kindness, coupled with her own former injustice towards him. Could the unsuspecting Margaret have lifted the veil which concealed the motives of her guardian, for his unwented shew of affection, her fond roung bear: would have shrunk with fear and aversion from the brother who could wilfully injure as innecest being who was committed to his cut. at the moment that her best feelings were called forth by his falseness. But we will leave the development of his character to time; that universal expositor, which rarely fails to unravel the most hidden mysteries; and continue to follow the steps of the orphan. From Mr. and Mrs. Green, who each took the most lively interest in her, she received unlimited kindness during her stay under their roof; but, well knowing that her hospitable friends were not rich, she entreated Mrs. Green to institute at inquiry for a situation for her, as a governess to vounz children.

After some ineffectual remonstrances on her unwelcome urgency to depart—some well intertioned obstacles on the part of that lady, which were quickly overcome by the young adventuress, application was made to several persons upon the subject, and, in the course of a few weeks, Margaret was engaged by a lady of rank a London, who had been commissioned by a relation, in one of the midland counties, to prosure an instructress for her children; and, as only a short time could be allowed her for reparation, the pain she felt at first going out nto a cold, calculating world, after the affluence he had hitherto enjoyed, was, happily, of short luration. Of her brother, she heard little that vas gratifying, for a letter she had written to Robert, at Paris, a month before her departure. still remained unnoticed; and one she had conemplated dispatching to Lorrimer, stating her plans subsequent to her father's death, still xcupied her desk, as she discovered by the paper on the day of its completion, that "The Trident" and sailed with sealed orders. In the confusion incident to the night of their last meeting, she had lost the address he had given her; and her only hope of discovering his residence had been by addressing to the George, at Portsmouth, as Robert did not even know of his being in England.

Mr. Green, however, had made some enquiries concerning them—according to her desire—during one of his hasty trips to the metropolis, and learnt, to the infinite sorrow and disappointment of Margaret, that Robert had left the country with a lady, whom he had estranged from her husband; while of Lorrimer, her information was infinitely more grateful to a sister's ear, for

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APPLICATION . The SALE TO SALE SALE SALES CONTRACTOR

though it told of his certain embarkation-it told of his worth-his courage-and the high estimawon in which he was held by his friends, his companions, and superiors, which made Margaret regret, more than ever, the fatal enor which had deprived her of the affectionate offers of a brother who was so universally admired. Thus left alone, she soon saw that to change the seeme, and to busy herself in her new avocations, was by far the best thing for her; and, notwithstanding her sorrow at quitting her friends, she gianty halled the morning which was appointed for her journey, for she already began to feel a sight return of the langour of sorrow, which had so heavily oppressed her for some time after ber father's death.

CHAPTER VIII.

The fisher hangs over the leaning boat,
And ponders the silver sea,
For love is under the surface hid,
And a spell of thought has he.
He heaves the wave like a bosom sweet,
And speaks in the ripple low,
Till the bait is gone from the crafty line,
And the hook hangs bare below.

WILLIA.

our readers the succeeding day to that h the incident recorded in our last chapurred was Sunday,—the Earl, always a jurch-goer, was particularly desirous that mily should assemble early at church; for eason, Horace Tulk and his pupil set off soon after breakfast.

owever, Stracy had expressed his intenaccompanying them, and he was not in 7, sometime was consumed, in an insearch in the immediate vicinity of the or him; and when their patience was exhausted, and their destination almost gained, Algernon descried him ascending the hill, on which the church stood, some half dozen paces in advance of the worthy bailiff of Highfield, on whose arm leaned a pretty looking girl, apparently his daughter.

"Not a word. Horace," said Ererton, on joining his friends, who had stopped until he came up, "not a word of reproach—I loitered away my time, until it was so late that I thought it better to come here direct. My father is not yet arrived, I hope!"

"No, but there is the carriage," replied his friend, as it came in sight, at the same time, cashing a meaning glance at Stracy, as the good bailing and his companion passed on with humble independence. "That looks a good modest girl," he continued, observing the bright blashes which suffused the cheek of the village maides.

"A tolerably correct judgment, for one so hasty." said Lord Stracy, "she has the destruction of awe and respect for 'The gentlement at the great house,' like all her sex. A good cirl. nevertheless, as you observe, Tulk."

Farther discussion was prevented by the new approach of the Earl, whom the brothers and Tak hastened to assist from the carriage; when the whole party entered the holy edifice, and for a time, the busy hum of voices was andible within

But the service at an end,—a throng inter-

i; in the foremost ranks of which appeared stracys.

om every quarter might be seen the unsoticated salutations of those who had anything un or lose by a change of masters—while paid their silent token to the great man, a great title-because he was so far their rior, and others did in like manner because ibour such a one bowed, and consequently st be right. A few there were, among the , who ventured to indulge a hope that my would recognise in them the favourites of poyhood-but it was only a very few who ired to be thus presumptuous; for the hty smile, with which the Earl's features ed, plainly denoted the condescension he rht he was betraved into, in noticing the reof those who depended upon him-in short, peared to receive their civility as homage

This could not give satisfaction, and variymptoms of disappointment were manifested e peasantry, as they loitered for a few miin the church-yard, before they separated. Did you observe that girl in the plain white et, two or three pews before us, Horace? " itracy, as he and Tulk crossed the first stile, eir return. "there was a gentleman with

ne arm with her."
es, certainly, for I observed how extremely ive she appeared to the service; a good n it was, too."

"Very likely. I do not know them," returned Birmer.

* (6) prome not, but what did you think of her appearance. Doi I say more than her face and programs beserve?

I did not know at her sufficiently to judge, Exercise, besides I never saw her face: in church, not, where coses thoughts should be otherwise concaved.

All my dear fellow, it is the duty of men of your choil to preach to us wicked ones; though, by the live. I have we might often turn the tables upon you. Mais account tout cela, she is a devilual poetry grain and no mistake."

- And year how can you tell she is the same person you alarmed yesterday. Stracy?" enquire has remyancen.

By the secret dictates of a wounded heart, Talk. returned his Lordship, with gravity, "size kooked at me, with such a pair of soft hearting even that I was sure I was recognised and foreven.—Did you never feel, or at least hear test, of a sympathy of soul?"

"I have certainly heard you tell me, at least

wenty times, of your prostration at beauty's kine, and as, in a short period, you recovered ourself,—I suppose this sympathetic influence f Miss Murray's eyes will wear off by degrees—ou are such an inconstant man, I really pity to girl who will call you husband."

"You are civil, Horace;—but you shall not ompassionate any "cara sposa" of mine yet, I romise you; I find it far more delightful to rander through a garden, where I may have a onstant succession of flowers, as often as the sun ises, than to be condemned to watch the rise and all even of the most perfect excotic; and though you accuse me of inconstancy—I like a constant rariety."

"Do not let your father hear these sentiments; they would never be forgotton—I had almost said, tever forgiven."

"I will beware—but now, tell me, Tulk," Mrsued the young nobleman, completely dropping the thoughtless gaiety of manner with which he had hitherto conversed, and, assuming a conficutial tone, "tell me why my father has become so severe towards me? Before my last trip the continent, he used to let all my peccadilloes assumheeded—whereas, now, he remarks every rifling action—in fact, I am weighed in the plance, and found wanting—who is not?"

"Your father finds you too wild, I suppose," sturned the other carelessly.

"Does he expect to have a son as immaculate as an angel? if so, he ought to have perfected his own and my mother's natures, before I was born—Do you not think so?"

"Excuse me, my dear Stracy, giving an opinion on this subject," said Horace, "since it is quite incompatible with my situation here. Gratitude forbids me to spy errors on the one hand, and I am too tenacious of Lord Stracy's smile to hazard incurring his frown, by attributing blame to him."

"Confound your policy," exclaimed Egerton, "tell the truth, and shame the devil. I had rather be condemned myself, than have you pursue that cold, calculating plan.—You call yourself my friend, and yet will not give me your advice, when asked for. Great affection you have for me."

"Nay, Egerton, do not impeach my attachment; that is unkind—unjust—I am very solicitous for your happiness, as I am sure you will allow when you are cool; and I have often counselled you, when asked—but you know I have always excited your anger, or ridicule."

"Oh! but you ought to know me too well, Horace, to mind my freaks—however, I will not trouble you to revoke your mental vow of letting me go to the devil my own way. Oh! pray my no more about it now, at all events, for I am not cool enough to hear you."

eably to this arrangement, the young men red to walk on in silence, for some distance, ford Stracy suddenly stopped.

race," he said, abruptly, taking his friend's "Horace, forgive my impetuosity. I am to quarrel with my best friend—forgive my e—you know what a sad fellow I am." now what a generous one you are, Stracy," Tulk, with a smile, "but I have nothing rive—I have almost forgotten what you

that a compliment?" asked his Lordship, "because in my mouth that speech always es me a frown. But one man may enter another must not look—allons." With vords, and re-established good understande friends continued their walk, and shortly ed the house.

some days, Stracy said no more about his nita; his time was chiefly spent in making if acquainted with the different parts of the, or in accompanying his father to make nother neighbourhood; an employment very to his distaste, as he was unacquainted most of the persons the Earl visited. In the series of the engaged Horace to dispense with his exist studies, he set off early with Algernon 1, having ascertained, from his father, that was, or rather had been, in days of old,



through their own domains with indifferent success, this line in a bramble.—" Che exclaimed, angrily, as figerk, to disentangle the horms of the say, Stracy, I have last—see, I shall never gothers."

thorns." "Oh! what a piscator th putting down his own rod, to assist his brother. "I the Izaac Walton to better pur of so weak a trick as this; he added, as a desperate line, "now sit down, here this Grouse hackle. By Jo fish," he continued, with a l basket on the grass, "three as my finger, upon my wor has forgotten the size of the boy, or else his early depr parent trout upon their gua "Perhaps we are not such

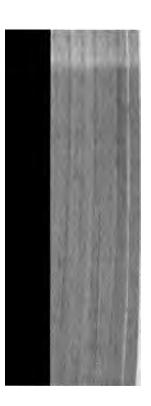
aken three. Come, I am sick of this slow let us go on."

ith all my heart," answered Algernon, ing up his rod and basket.

a quarter of an hour they strolled along, gaily, and remarking various trifling in their progress. Now stopping to a heron, as it slowly took its way from the whence they had disturbed it, to a wood reat distance—now pausing to admire the ct, or standing to observe some village n, as they rolled and tumbled on the grass reicinity.

wing the brook, they at length reached art where it ran through the property of n Beresford, when Stracy, jumping over ce which enclosed it, exclaimed, as his fly thtly borne upon the water, "The devil's f I cannot take something here, for see, e fish are plentiful. By the bye, I wonder Miss Murray has been all the week? I ot seen her since Sunday."

ccessful throw of Algernon's line put an their conversation, and, as the fish readily the fly in this spot, half an hour more on gone. It was now past noon, the swere in the altitude of their glory. Alwas up to his knees in water, and Lord deeply engaged in replacing a worn-out then the former suddenly perceived a LIII.



"By no means," replied eyeing the party through I Captain Beresford and the fortunate! I shall get an ir "But Stracy," remonstrate such dirty dogs, so wet

"Well! boy—if you are yourself, get into the bush but I shall stand to look Again he whipped the wat rance of the approach of tabsolutely could hear the behind him, when, turning r surprise, he again raised h

A slight blush tinged the girl, as he did so; but Ca diately accosted the young with a slight inclination, rupt your amusement, sir, me, I hope—I do not all friends to fish here."

"You don't say so,"

rtainly not, sir, I did not know any part of cam was interdicted."

ave endeavoured as far as possible to prepredations being committed here, sir, and se you find I have been tolerably sucto judge from the respectable lining of sket."

! we have a pretty good show," said taking the basket from his brother, and it to the Captain, as he added, "but as; unintentionally infringed upon your e can only atone by restoring the booty, may claim the honour of being ranked our friends." He laid a stress upon the d, and the Captain replied, with a smile, means, sir, you are perfectly welcome to r you have taken. Indeed, if you be the art, I shall be most happy to afford ther day's sport, at any future period, perhaps you will favour me with your efore we part, that is mine," giving him s he spoke.

Stracy—Lord Stracy," said Egerton, ly; "and this is my brother, who you will e to introduce to you, Captain Beresford; ay assure you for him, as well as myself, shall be most happy to avail ourselves kind permission."

must also permit me, my lord," replied tain, "to express my pleasure at having

this expectanity of making your acquaintance; for I had the honour of knowing the Earl of Treshell in my younger days; and, although I go eat but little, it will gratify me to renew an acquaintance with any part of his family." Captain Beresford then presented his nieces to the wallet had been and concluded by saying, "perhaps up had, we can persuade you to accompany us to the house, and take some refreshment."

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"Out riding, my lord, with the Earl and Mr. Ugernon."

- "And Lady Trefoil?"
- "Is taking a drive with the Ladies Stracy."
- "Did they leave any message for me?"
- "No, my lord."
- "Well! I suppose we dine at seven, Dalston?"
- "Yes, my lord," and abruptly terminating this lort colloquy, his lordship resumed his hat, and brung down the steps at the door.

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CHAPTER IX.

You say, when "I rove,
I know nothing of love;"
'Tis true, I am given to range:
If I rightly remember,
I've loved a good number,
Yet there's pleasure, at least, in a change.

BYRON.

GAILY crossing the park, Lord Stracy approached the neat, unpretending edifice which was inhabited by Mr. Prior, standing in a sequestered part of the domain, and before the door of which sat Hannah, the only daughter of the bailiff. "Well! my pretty Hannah," he said, as he leant carelessly on the paling in front of the cottage, "I find you busy as usual?"

"It would ill-become me, my lord," replied the maiden, looking up with a blush and a smile, "to be idle—my father expects me to make enough by my work to support myself, in part at least—"

yourself! but you can never do that ing—those pretty fingers were never rk."

lord, you must not say so; I know I irl, and must not believe all that you as to tell me."

ieve me, Hannah! surely you not do guilty of falsehood—that would be!"

my lord," returned Hannah, blushat the misconstruction of her words, applying herself to her employment l assiduity.

ou will credit me, Hannah," said the nobleman, "when I tell you how far ove your situation—when I tell you you are—"

haps, my lord, you will believe me," innah, with a crimson cheek, and a half timid, voice, "when I tell you it is to waste your time in talking a poor girl!"

ink me foolish, do you," said Stracy, nd passing as he spoke through the ch separated them, "after that concannot refuse to try and make me e, what do you complain of?" He elf on the grassy bank beside her, and, ng, she said—

I, you cannot think you are behaving

properly in coming every day here, to amuse yourself at my expense. Certainly, my father is the servant of yours, but that is no reason that you should persecute me—pray, my lord, do not trouble yourself to come any more;" she spoke earnestly, but Egerton, whose mood was at that moment to torment, answered—

"You mistake, little Hannah, the trouble is a pleasure, and I am sure you would not deprive me of so trifling a one—come, sit down, or you will oblige me to rise—"

"Indeed, my lord," resumed the cottager, "you must not ask me, for I cannot comply."

"Well! if I stand to please you, unkind Hannah, you must do as I ask you."

"To please me—Lord Stracy, you must leave me."

"Cruel girl," said her tormentor, in a feigned tone of distress, gently laying his hand on her arm, to reseat her on the bank, "cruel girl, to require me to gratify you at so high a price—now, gentle Hannah, a kiss is the only exchange I will consent to take for my dismissal, you will grant me that:" as he spoke, he advanced a step or two towards her, as if about to steal the trifle he had demanded. The colour mounted into the cheek of the peasant, and, stepping back, she said, hastily, "My lord, you forget yourself—I am your servant—but not your slave, and you know that, were any of your friends here, you

nld be ashamed to treat me in this manner ust shut you out, my Lord, indeed I must." had retreated into the door-way of the cote, and held the door in her hand, half unwillto close it upon her visiter.

Well, do it, Hannah," replied Stracy, smiling, necessary, I can come in at the window."

a this manner, did the young man continue to with the temper and feelings of this humble atry girl, for some time, purely for want of ething else to employ his time.

n the preceding Sunday, as we have already tioned, he had for the first time seen Hannah r, whose appearance and manner had pleased; and, being naturally inclined to make the t of any sort of entertainment which was wn in his way, he had loitered away some, almost every day during the week, in talk-to the bailiff's daughter.

afortunately, he had much idle time; for, in nornings, Horace Tulk was closely engaged Algernon. Lady Clara, also, devoted much to study, while Lord and Lady Trefoil were separately busied—the former with his bailiff, steward, and the latter in the flower garden; ng him without a suitable companion, until as summoned to take his usual equestrian rise with his father. Most truly, it is said, idleness is the root of all evil, for to it may tributed many, too many, of the faults, follies,

and crimes, of the young, and thoughtless! Hannah Prior had been strictly and religiously brought up by her father, who was a sensible, clear-headed man; but nothing more; clever at his business, and interested for the family he had so long served. Having lost his wife, while his child was young, he had made her his companion. and formed her youthful mind by his own upright opinions. Hannah had never left her native village for many days together; and, to make her father happy, and to do her duty in the station in which she was placed by her Maker, were her sole wishes. On first seeing her young lord, she had felt all that awe which the poor entertain for high rank; but she quickly found that Stracy was a person rather to be loved than feared.—his liveliness amused, at the same time that it annoved, her, for she was not so weak as to believe what he said of the extent of his admiration. though she could not help feeling a secret pleasure when she saw him come by the cottage. he passed two or three times a day, he had always something gay to say, and, although she was sometimes vexed with herself for listening to his nonsense, and tempted to treat him less deferentially than at first, she endeavoured to bear in mind that he was the son of her father's Patron. and to conduct herself accordingly.

The dressing-bell sounded, as Stracy gained the house, and his Lordship hastened to make ette, that he might not incur the Earl's; for since the few hasty words he had to escape him, when speaking on these s to his friend, he had resolved not to give use for Horace to condemn him.

Il, Stracy," said Lady Clara, as he enne saloon, "how did you like your new? Algernon has told us all about your roduction to Miss Murray."

he indeed?" returned the brother, darting f enquiry and displeasure at the supposed ent.

no, Egerton," answered Algernon, jumprom the chair, upon which he was playing e of his little sisters, "I have only menur adventure to day; no more kind hints, lease, brother mine."

at do you mean?" enquired Lady Claranothing particular," said Stracy, "I did erstand you, that was all! What did you the young ladies, Gerny?"

the little one is the prettiest, though urray is the best figure; but was it not acy, that Captain Beresford did not know were?"

that was a spice of pretence—I fancy, he said afterwards, he should have known ny likeness to what my father was at the e.".

Egerton," returned his sister, "you have answered my question?"

"I beg your Ladyship's pardon, I am sure; pray have the goodness to allow the dulcet tones of your voice to vibrate again upon my tympanum."

"Really, Stracy, you are so silly,—I have almost forgotten what it was—but, I believe, I asked how you liked the Misses Murray."

"Comme c'a," said his Lordship, carelessly. and adding, in the words of the noble Poet,

"'Tis true, your budding Miss is very charming, But shy, and awkward at first coming out, So much alarmed that she is quite alarming, All giggle, blush, half pertness, and half pout."

"A pleasing description, truly," answered Lady Clara, "but I am quite aware how fastidious you are—Now I have a great wish to judge for myself, and should be glad to find some companions in these ladies—you must introduce me, Stracy."

"You will do nothing of the sort, Egerton," interposed the Earl: "when I judge it expedient for my family to become acquainted with any of those around us, I will myself officiate as master of the ceremonies."

"Oh! I am not ambitious of the prerogative, I assure you, my lord," returned the son, "and I am sure, Clara did not know such a request would be disagreeable to you."

The announcement of dinner put a period to farther discussion on the subject, and the Earl did not again resume it, to Stracy's delight, for pected, by his father's manner, that he from some cause, have laid his command is son not to continue the nascent acance with Captain Beresford-in which he anticipated amusement from fishing we been resigned, with as good a grace as be. Unshackled by such a parental order, the intention of Stracy to be a frequent at Brookside, for more than one reason, we shall leave to the sequel to develope. v and Susan Murray had been educated in seclusion, in their early years, by a pious who had departed this life about a couple rs previous to the time to which we refer, tting her two girls, who were on the point ing the school where she had placed them, h their education, and were just ripening omanhood, to the care of her brother. n the date of Captain Beresford's retirerom the service of his country, or, as he f termed it, his being laid up in ordinary. afforded Mrs. Murray and her orphans a house. His own boy had benefitted by the hich his aunt had readily accorded, while mpanionship of his cousins furnished him very advantage of the affectionate love of . That boy was now a wanderer on the y ocean, a worthy successor to his gallant , whose hope, whose pride, was centered in ild of his lost Elizabeth.

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It was verging on four o'clock, when Egerton made his appearance again at Highfield, where he hastened to the saloon, in which the family usually sat; finding it untenanted, he re-entered the hall, and loudly called "Dalston." That

Are at the sight of any male thing, when are confined to the country. Be assured it fore important to gain over the petticoats, in case, than the nobler part of creation—bes, Beresford is a very sailor—all heart—so e along."

Tith reluctant step, Horace followed his agile panion, saying, "But, Egerton, it will look add to make an appearance on this side of the se, you should, at least, enter from the drive." 'Pooh! how fastidious you are! verily I do r, friend Horace, modesty doth stand in your y—come, Algernon, are you afraid of going h me?"

Oh! no, I want to see these friends of yours in."

Well! let me have my blushing honours each e of me," said his lordship, offering an arm to brother and Tulk, "mind—I shall expect both to look shy and modest for me, seeing m, unfortunately, devoid of such commodities self; only remember, Horace," he added, ou must not poach upon my manor."

n this way he continued to rattle on, to the usement of his companions, as they sauntered rards the house of Captain Beresford; when acy led them to the glass door of the saloon,

which opened on the lawn. On the mat lay a large spaniel, basking in the sun, which no sooner perceived Egerton's unsolicited entrance into the hall, than he rose like a lion from his lair, and, with an angry growl, placed himself immediately in the path of the intruder.

"So ho! my fine fellow," said Stracy, stepping hastily back, "'Pax Vobiscum;' I have no inclination to try the strength of your jaws—but you are a noble dog, is he not, Horace?" His friend had not time to answer before Captain Beresford turned the corner of the house, and no sooner perceived who were his guests, than he advanced, with a smile, to meet Lord Stracy, who said,—

"I fear you will think I have taken an unpardonable liberty, Captain Beresford, in storming your house on this side; but I could not resist my desire of thanking you for your courtesy the other morning, when I was walking so near Brookside."

"I need hardly say you are welcome, my dear Lord, and even more so if you visit me in this friendly way, than if we were to meet only in formality. I am a rough son of Neptune, and the wearisome etiquette of society is little consonant with my taste."

Mutual civilities were now exchanged; Lord Stracy's friend, and the Captain, were made known to each other; after which, instead of Intering the house, their host proposed proceeding to the shrubbery. "For," said he, with the pleasure of a parent beaming on his countenance, "I was most agreeably surprised to receive a visit from my son, immediately after your departure, the first day of our meeting, and I shall be happy, my Lord, to see you acquainted."

Of course his Lordship expressed his gratification at such a prospect, and Captain Beresford said, as they walked on, "I hope, my Lord, you had not been here long when we met. It was quite accidental my returning to the house, as I had been called away to the stable, and had intended to join my young people sooner, had not Harry requested me to bring his favourite Nelson."

"Ah! that dog alone preserved your hall from being invaded," said Stracy, laughing, "he seemed to consider himself master of the soil."

"Yes," said Captain Beresford, patting the head of the animal, as it leaped, fawningly, upon him; "the old boy is like his namesake, both loved and feared on his own quarter-deck; I wonder he did not declare open war against you, directly, for he is rather savage, and I have often told Harry he ought not to bring him home."

"Oh! I did not wait for any ebullition of his displeasure, but wisely retreated on the first appearance of hostility."

Conversing on various light topics, the gentle-

·men at length neared the spot where the Misses Murray were seated, each engaged with their sketch book; while their cousin was reading to them. They rose at the approach of Captain Beresford and his companions, and Susan, running up to her uncle, with all the gaiety of "sweet seventeen," exclaimed,—

"Do look, dear sir, how successful I have been in my attempt to draw my cousin; he says he is sure it is not like, at all, but what do you think?"

Captain Beresford took the book, with a smile, and, having introduced his son to the three young friends that attended him, said, as he looked at his niece's performance, with the indulgent eye of an uncle, "Not so bad for a first attempt, my dear, but I did not think Harry squinted."

"There, Susy," said young Beresford, playfully, "I told you that you had given me a gimlet eye; and look here," he continued, laughing, "you have made one side of my face like those figures we see of the winds, blowing a nor'wester."

"Oh! Harry, what a shocking quiz you are. I dare say you cannot produce any thing so correct, yourself."

"That remains to be seen, fair cousin," he said, gaily, "but when I turn limner, it shall be in favour of one of the most beautiful and faultless of her class."



Tho is that, Harry?" asked Susan, slipping rm within that of her cousin, and looking by up in his face.

ne you are not likely to see at present,"
ed Harry, "for she is not mine yet, though
is no saying what time and perseverance
o."

hy you never told me anything about this of yours, before. Where is she?"

have always made a point of seeing her time I have been at Portsmouth, the last r three years," returned the young man, sly smile, as he turned to Algernon, who deavouring, in vain, at Captain Beresford's ation, to make Nelson take the water. At le sign from his master, the noble doged into the pond, and, diving, soon rel with the stone which had been thrown in, infinite amusement of the visiters.

here," said Harry, with a look of pleasure laid his hand on the dripping animal, in of his approbation, "that is just the way ed after one of our mids, who fell overduring our last cruise."

d how did it happen, that he went over"enquired Horace, with interest. Lord and his brother also turned to listen to ration; and Harry said,—

! poor little fellow! he had only joined a eks, and, being still very timid up aloft, ared by the oldsters to lay out on the vards, when he lost his presence of mind, and his hold together. Nelson was standing beside me on the forecastle, at the moment the boy fell; and, without a word from any one, plunged into the waves. Our first lieutenant, who saw the accident, as well as myself, instantly ordered a boat to be lowered, into which I and several hands jumped, and we rapidly pulled for the spot where we could see the dog struggling in the water. He had seized the unfortunate reefer by the collar, but had not strength to swim far with him, and, I think I never saw joy and gratitude more strongly expressed on the countenance of any animal than they were in that of Nelson, at the moment we hauled him and his charge on board. You may be sure he has been in high favour with every one since this feat."

"And very justly so," said Lord Stracy, "it was a gallant action."

"But was not the boy ill, after such an alarm, Harry?" said Miss Murray.

"Oh! we thought, for some time, he had slipped his moorings altogether," returned her cousin, "for he had sunk twice before the dog reached him; as we were going free at the time, and could not haul up the courses in a moment. However," he continued, with a laugh, "he was made over to our worthy 'medico,' and the rest of the idlers, who brought him round in an hour or two."

"I hope," said Lord Stracy, laughing, "the

their next distribution of rewards. you award him, Miss Murray?" her difficult to determine," she said, it I think the recompense might be his master." now what you should have, Harry,"

isan; "it should be a chain of the it, to confine you to home." you, fair cousin, but I will relinavour, for the blessing of liberty—, and the power to wander

the winds can bear the billows' foam."

u are a shocking truant, Harry,"
"I fear you will never comprehend
of peace and retirement."
defend me from such horrors," re-

ly. "I had rather be blown up in little craft, than be a land lubber. he added, "to any of the present

then devoted to the sca," said Lord w it appears to me fraught with

nough," returned Beresford; "but d grandfather, have set me a worthy imitation, which I must naturally follow; while you, my Lord, have predilection in favour of our bro-

men now entered into an amicable

discussion upon the various merits and demerits of their favourite professions, in which Jessy joined with so much modesty, while at the same time, her remarks were so judicious, that Stracy was equally amused and delighted. Captain Beresford, meanwhile, engaged the more steady Horace in conversation; and his youngest niece, attended by the privileged Nelson, led Algernon to see the lions of the place. Thus passed a couple of hours, each conveying and receiving pleasure, until Horace reminded his volatile friend of an engagement they had entered into, of riding out with Lady Clara.

"Ah! I shall get into disgrace, indeed," said his lordship; "my character is none of the best for punctuality, now. I intend to send for my dogs soon, Beresford; and I hope you will join me in my shooting expeditions."

"Until which period," said the captain, "you will come here, I hope, to fish, as often as it is agreeable to you."

" I shall be most happy," answered Egerton.

"Shall we say to-morrow, or the next day, then?" proposed Harry; "but" he added, as he fancied Stracy was about to raise some objections, "we shall see you again very soon, at all events."

This being assented to, the party separated with mutual good understanding; and the brothers, with Horace, quickly turned towards Highfield.

w tell me, my wise friend," said Egerton, n as they were out of hearing of the ords, "tell me your opinion of these ymphs. Do they answer the description you of them?"

ave had the benefit of a poetic, as well as rovisatorial, account of Miss Murray, at returned Horace, smiling. "Pray, which consider the true one?"

iy, perhaps, a little admixture of both,"lordship.

ell, then, I think by abating a spice of the e of one description, and of the severity other, we may agree."

th! what a triumph!" exclaimed Stracy, ly laying his hand on Tulk's shoulder, lding him at arms' length.

nat do you mean, Egerton?" said the other prise.

it not a triumph to find we have arat the same conclusion, for almost the me in our lives, Horace, and it may be t? Ah! let me enjoy my triumph."

rtainly; but I hope, my dear Stracy, this more be the last, than I am sure it is not st, time we have coincided in opinion. I ry you think so ill of me, or yourself; for not both, must be wrong to be ever at ce. Unanimity is the bond of happiness, at which——"

"Here, Algernon," said Stracy, turning round to his brother, who was busily fashioning a hockey stick, as he walked in the rear; "come, and attend with due deference to the lecture your tutor is about to deliver, upon the wisdom of the great king, who exemplified his large family by a bundle of sticks; you know the tale?"

"To be sure I do, Egerton," answered the boy, laughing; "I do not want to hear it again."

"Ni moi, non plus, Horace, for I have had more to do with sticks, 'in my young days, when George the Third was king,' than enough; so a truce to such things."

"I was not going to favour you with any," returned Horace, quietly. "I believe I might as well try to break an untamed horse as expect you to maintain your gravity five minutes."

"Bien obligé," said the other, adding, "But come on, Gerney, Lady Clara will be out of patience."

His brother obeyed his call; and in a few minutes they gained their destination, where they found Lady Clara impatiently waiting their arrival.

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CHAPTER X.

A life he lov'd of liberty and ease, And all his pleasant labour was to please; He made the hearts of gentle dames his prey.

To part is painful; nay, to bid adieu Ev'n to a favourite spot is painful too.

CRABBE.

you have made your appearance at last,"
Lady Clara; "the horses have been
ig this half hour, and my father wanted to
ide me to go in the carriage; but I thought
race was with you, Stracy, I might depend
your return."

ou did right to trust to our noble monitor,; for, by my faith, I should have quite ten you, if he had not jogged my memory; er forgets you."

y Clara's eyes sparkled for a moment, with than their accustomed brilliancy, as her r spoke; but, without further delay, they ed their horses, and proceeded on their From that day, frequent were the visits of our friend Egerton to Brookside; and as often did Harry Beresford come to join Lord Stracy in the woods of Highfield.

During the following few weeks, the Earl of Trefoil, contrary to the expectation of his family, encouraged the acquaintance which was ready to spring up between his sons and Captain Beresford's young relations; for he knew how wild a disposition was possessed by the inheritor of his rank, and employment he conceived to be the best safeguard against his forming any plebeian attachment. Not that Lord Trefoil entertained any wish for his son to form a high matrimonial alliance - No - he thought that the Earldom of Trefoil was quite radiant enough to allow of a portion of its brilliancy being shed on an untitled, though amiable and accomplished, Lady Stracy; but it was his constant fear that Egerton would involve himself in many difficulties, before he made up his mind to attach himself permanently, as he had certainly returned from Italy with many more light and careless habits than he had manifested before leaving England. In his youth the Earl had been somewhat gay, which might, perhaps, make him less lenient to his son's peccadilloes than he otherwise would have been; as he knew what had been his own troubles in consequence.

He was, therefore, happy to find Egerton

to spend his time in the society of resford; and he even went so far as irst upon the Captain, who although an invalid, was easily prevailed upon oung companions to return the civility. sakes, and thus an acquaintance blished between the families; which, ather formal from the illness of the v. and the haughtiness of the other, oly compensated for, by the cordiality on subsisted between the young people Scarcely a day passed without sides. mmunication, or some meeting between ady Clara found a congenial friend in urray, whose amiable and quiet mancealed a mind of much depth and power. etter known, too, she manifested a conportion of wit and animation; and ften found himself listening with more ion to her remarks than he ever felt. aughing with the thoughtless Susan. h this attractive society, Stracy failed uently to idle his time at the bailiff's and, indeed, any other in the village the residence of innocence and beauty. ifling thus with the farmers' daughters, g a homely refreshment with their fathers himney corner, many were the tales of nd distress he listened to, with a kindness

and sympathy that won him the love and respect of these simple people.

With the open hand and heart of youth and generosity, he would divest himself of any thing at hand, by which he could diffuse happiness around him. Through his kindness, this peasant was secretly enabled to pay his rent; one or two children in a large family could now go to Miss Murray's school, owing to a weekly stipend from the young lord; or a girl, about to be married, had to thank him for her wedding gown. Thus, he was soon greatly beloved, and, had a whisper of reproach or censure been launched against him, a dozen, aye, fifty, voices, would have been raised in his defence. It was now past the middle of August; and Lord Stracy, anxious to be in readiness for the shooting season, determined to go into Devonshire, and himself arrange and superintend the removal of his dogs, of which he was very choice.

His father rather seconded this plan, as it would save him the trouble of going there himself in the course of the autumn, for he could depute Stracy to see that every thing was as it should be; and, in a couple of days, it was determined he was to set off. Before doing so, however, he found there were numberless things expected of him; his brother hoped for a final

: upon the trout; his father thought he ititled to the support of his arm in a walk: Lady Clara asked for the pleasure of a ride "What a bore it is to be in such high st." muttered his lordship, as hour after flew by, without his being able to go to side. "I never shall have time for all my ss:" he forgot, at that moment, that for weeks he had been entirely free to amuse f, which he had done frequently at the se of others. This, however, was only a g cloud over his sunny brow; he was gey-we think we may say always, ready to , and he performed the several little offices ed with a good grace, though his impatient ed him to chafe inwardly at his occupations. okside in due time was visited, however, ter passing a merry hour with Harry, and usins, he bade adieu to them and Captain ord, and retraced his steps; after walking minutes, he drew out his watch-" Nearly aid he, thoughtfully, as he struck the re-, as if to assure himself by oral demonstraat the hour was not farther advancedclock, and we do not dine until seven-I have time to stop at Prior's-that little , Hannah, will think I have forgotten her," ith this determination, his lordship vaulted gate, and gained the path which led to tage.

A soft, low whistle from Stracy, brought Hannah to the door; a smile of pleasure danced round her pretty mouth, and delight beamed in her eye, for the simple peasant girl had learnt to hail her young master's visits with a joy she knew not the danger of. His gentle manners, lively winning ways, and kind presents, had cast down the barrier of reserve Hannah had raised for her self-defence, and hour after hour had latterly been spent by her in his society, without an effort to shield her poor deluded heart from the insidious wiles of her deceiver.

"Hannah, my pretty one," said the thoughtless Stracy, as he snatched the kiss he had a few weeks before solicited in vain, "I am come to say farewell, love, but I cannot stay one moment. Is your father within?"

"No, my lord—but why do you say, farewell, you have not been near me these two days."

"Because I am going into Devonshire for some time, I feared you would think it unkind if I did notcome to you once more;" those words were scarcely utterred, when Prior and his young friend, Ralph Plowden, turned the corner and entered the garden.

Hannah coloured deeply, for it was the first time she had been detected in her interviews with our hero, but Stracy said, with infinite presence of mind, as the bailiff raised his hat with much respect to him, "I want some of your china roses for my sister, Prior, so come, Hannah, cut me a nice bud?

Happy to have any employment, she approached the bush, whither his lordship followed her, and, while he seemed to be selecting a flower, he said, "Love dwells among the roses, so give he one to wear for your sake," then adding loud—"these two give me, these two, Hannah," a turned to Plowden, saying, "I hope your ther is stronger now, Ralph?"

"Much—much, my lord, thanks to you, for rocuring him the advice of Dr. Strange," relied the young farmer, with a grateful salutation, "we are very much obliged to you indeed, y lord."

"Glad he is better, Ralph, tell him to build mself up by the time I return—good bye," conuded he, with a familiar nod to his dependents, he turned on his heel.

"What a fine noble heart he has!" said lowden?

"Aye, just such another as his cousin, Lord leginald would have been," sighed the old man, the same bright smile—the same joyous step—od grant he meet a happier fate."

"Ah! I hope so, dear father," exclaimed lannah, "Lord Reginald's death was so very readful!"

"It was, my child, so do not let us speak of it my more."

"Put on your bonnet, girl, and we will go home with Ralph, for an hour."

"That I will, father, it is a sweet evening, is it not, Ralph?"

"Every thing is sweet with you, Hannah," returned he, as the bailiff's daughter tripped past him to the cottage, with a smile.

Lord Stracy, after taking leave of his friends, who all felt, at his departure, that the greatest charm of Highfield fled with him, mounted the box of the fastest coach on the road, and was quickly borne to his destination.

distance to need a property of the

HIGHFIELD TOWER.

CHAPTER XI.

"Margaret, you must not think to pass throug Without its sorrows, and without its strife; Good, dutiful, and worthy, as you are, You must have griefs, and you must learn to

WE left Margaret Bentham on the p barking in the novel career she had c for herself. A career which, she heard Green, would be fraught with many but still one to which she felt comp which offered her immediate change ployment; the two things she felt is ameliorate the shock her father's dem own subsequent desertion had infi mind naturally far too sensitive for t of life.

As some tender exotic, for the first ti to the rude blast of heaven, droops, most annihilated; but after time and strength rallies, and it becomes even m than formerly, so Margaret's tone o thrued, when she found it necessary to exert herself. She felt even more capable of combating the dangers which might fall to her lot from the chastening her spirit had undergone. She had learnt, in her affliction, to look for comfort and support to the throne of grace, and pious trust in heaven, prepared her to enter the world with a hely hope of being able to do her duty, and afford satisfaction to her patrons, and contentment to herself.

In Mr. and Mrs. Green she was assured of steady friends, in their house she knew she had a kind home, though one she resolved should not be taxed too severely; and, with a bright and happy smile, she stepped into the coach which was to convey her to the end of her journey, a distance of seventy miles. Two persons occupied the vehicle when she entered and took her seat beside an old lady, who was strenuously endeavouring to silence the growls of a pug dog she had in her lap, and which appeared highly incensed at the introduction of a stranger. Five minutes elapsed before the coach started, during which time, Mr. Green, who had driven her into the town in his gig, stood and spoke to her through the window. Again she promised to write soon-reminded him to convey her kind love to her friend, and, as they started, waved her hand to him, while the rebellious tears started into her eyes.

n was traversed by our three travellers te silence. Margaret did not know opposite neighbour was like, farther he was young, for her head was bent her close mourning bonnet veiled her ce from observation.

ce of her female companion, in tones ess to her favourite, as she placed him posite seat, first drew her attention; up, and; finding that the gentleman's steadily fixed upon her-in undisguised , she quietly turned to the window, she gazed for a quarter of an hour terruption, except from that afforded ppish pug, which was subject, every nistress took her eyes off it, to some ovance from the gentleman's stick, n shew a famous set of white teeth. stranger looked so fixedly at Margaret is quite unwilling to look round, until voice of the old woman beside her e her start. "Really sir," she said, in . "it is very strange you cannot leave ne, when I have asked you so often, will be quite ruined. I never was in a so troublesome a person-never." me to say you must be gratified. eplied the gentleman, with consideration—" for variety is charming. anything for novelty."

**Four actions belie your words, sir," retorted she, warmly, "or you would not have persevered so long in tormenting that animal; I must put him outside," continued she, as the creature smarled again, in consequence of his tail being slyly pulled.

"And the best place for the infernal brute," answered the other, drawing off his glove, and examining his finger, "if he had grazed the skin I would have shown him the way to jump out

of the window."

Here the tender mistress took her pet in her arms, as if fearful the threat might be put in execution; and, throwing herself back in the carriage, closed her eyes in apparent defiance

of farther importunity.

Her enemy then appeared to resign the contest, and, turning to Margaret, enquired whether she did not feel too much air, at the same moment attempting to raise the window. She replied in the negative, and, for the first time, gained courage enough to ascertain that the traveller was handsome; that a smile of arch good humour played round his mouth, and a brilliant eye lighted up a countenance of much expression.

"Well," he said, in answer to her polite, though laconic, reply, "I always find the draught in a coach so unpleasant that I am surprised ladies can bear it. I go outside in general, but, unfortunately, I omitted taking my place yesternd had the mortification to find every seat ed, on leaving town." Margaret, to whom formation was very uninteresting, merely, and he continued, "not that I object to ide place for a change, with a pleasant nion; but I have a perfect horror of those ces, yclept dogs—infants," and dropping ce to a whisper, "old women."

nile involuntarily crossed Margaret's face, comical expression of the stranger's nance, at this declaration, which made the ated female open her eyes, and dart an look at the speaker, for she caught the ords, notwithstanding the young man's tion. She had, however, nearly completed arney—she drew her shawl more closely her—resettled her bonnet—put on her and hugged her pet more closely, in prem for a removal; while the gentleman d her with that sort of calm irony of r which irritates even more than words.

the coach had already stopped at the gate small house, near the town, where the ers expected a change of horses, and she need her removal with alacrity.

u will permit me to have the pleasure of ng whether Pug be dead or not, ma'am, I travel this road again?" said her stor.

rtainly not, sir," was the short and angry

answer she vouchsafed, as she laid her hand on her own wicket, and, like a tigress in its lair, derived greater indignation from being pursued bome.

The young man laughed, "Are we to journey much farther together?" continued he, as the ceach again was put in motion.

"Highfield is the name of the place I am going to, sir," replied Margaret, timidly, for she felt doubly uncomfortable, in being left alone with a person who seemed to take pleasure in vexing a fellow traveller.

"Indeed! then I shall have the pleasure of seeing you safe, and am not going much beyond that, myself. Are you well acquainted with that acighbourhood?"

"I have never been there yet, sir."

"Then you are unacquainted, I presume, with Captain Beresford-the Earl and Countess of Trefoil?"

"It is to Highfield Tower I am going, sir."

"Hah! as governess to the little ladies Stracy?" Margaret bent her head, and he continued, "well! I hope you may find your task au easy one; but you must expect those children to be very unruly. I never could manage them."

"You know the family, sir!" said Margaret, now in her turn venturing to ask a question, as her curiosity increased, to know something of her new domicile.

es," returned he, with a slight smile, ssion of which Margaret could not I, "I have known the Earl indifferently st two or three-and-twenty years.

t looked up at the speaker, he could fond that age, she thought; but she emark, and, after a moment's pause, i,

nay I ask whether you have ever seen ess?"

r, I was engaged by Lady R-, in

I can tell you, with much pleasure, a person of great amiability, one inis sure to be beloved by those who

ave been informed, sir, but the Earl is tric."

arl is a good husband and father," inl her companion, quickly, "and a
riend to all who merit it; but he has
arities, like every one else. Happy
e for his son, if he could bear with his
f discipline;" he spoke earnestly, as
ed, "but Lord Stracy, I fear, is incorrughtless, though I do not think any
bring more serious charges against
errible wild dog he is, indeed—but in
Lady Clara, you will find every thing
sirable in a female friend—all that is
noble."

Margaret, highly amused and interested, at this sketch of the family she was so shortly to form a member of, listened, in mute attention to ber entertaining companion, until the stopping of the stage for the passengers to dine, put a period to the tale.

Having been provided by Mrs. Green with ample refreshment for the journey, Miss Bentham declined alighting, but her new friend, whose manner, she thought, suddenly became far more easy than she liked-could not hear of her remaining alone-and, on her persisting still in her original intention, said, as he stood at the open coach door, with a smile, which spoke his determination to gain his object of keeping her company, notwithstanding her endeavours to shake him off.

" If I cannot persuade you to accompany me, at least, you will not refuse to bestow a morsel of your repast upon your faithful protector;" at he said this, he laid his hand on her little store basket, which raised the spirit of the orphan. and, with a flush of anger, she replied .--

" It is from persons like you, sir, who do not know how to behave, that ladies should seek to be protected. I have already told you my wishes, and, unless you want me to think you devoid of combest, you will leave me!"

" I did not think that pretty mouth could utter such severe words," returned he, gravely, " Lard Smarr did not intend to make an unfavourable

ssion upon Miss Bentham, I assure you; e readily withdraws his unwelcome suit: "rith a slight bow, his lordship turned away atered the Inn.

garet started! could it indeed be the son nobleman she was going to, who had been ig the picture of himself and family, for itertainment. Yes, truly, his looks—his r—his conversation, all confirmed his ter, and she tried to recal what she had uring his incognito; nothing, however, o her mind as having been derogatory to nation of the Earl of Trefoil's dependant; us re-assured, she awaited his return, with ution to repel any farther trifling on his

might, however, have spared herself any on the subject, for in a very few minutes spectable females joined her, and, she Lord Stracy say, when the coachman asked ther he should resume his inside seat, or at on the roof just vacated,

! I travel outside now, certainly; three are more than a match for any man!" ugh assured her that this joke was relished to whom it was addressed, and again, w minutes, they rattled along the turnpike hrough a beautiful part of the country, y new, and, consequently, entertaining to ret. Her companions were also agreeable,

and the time sped delightfully until she alighted, between six and seven o'clock, at the gate of Highfield Tower; where Lady Trefoil's carriage was waiting to receive her.

Lord Stracy mounted the box, and, taking possession of the reins, drove her home, thus releasing her from the fear of another tête à tête with him; which she would have disliked, though it might have been only for a short distance. With a politeness Margaret could easily have dispensed with, Lord Stracy handed her from the carriage; and, desiring a servant to lead her to Lady Trefoil. he turned to his brother and two little sisters: the latter of whom jumped round him with infantine joy; and, affectionately saluting each, he put his hands on the children's shoulders, and accompanied them to the saloon. He there found the rest of the family together, with several visiters, who had arrived two or three days before, to spend a short time with the Earl and Countess. These consisted of Sir James Carbuncle, an old comrade of the ci-devant General Stracy, with his wife and daughter, besides the amiable Lord Power, and his brother Vincent, a noisy, rattling fellow, more at home in the stable, or on the coach-box, than in a drawing-room. By all these friends, the gay Stracy was most kindly greeted; and, as the Earl warmly shook the hand of his eldest born, he said, with a kindness which warmed the son's heart.

e need scarcely say how happy we are to ou home again, my dear Egerton, for you eceive ample demonstration of it in the smiles of all around you."

I am welcome, for I was almost persuaded ong my stay in Devonshire, by the Herl told them, however, I was of so much ince here, in keeping you all to your as Harry Beresford would say, that they we me up. By the bye, Horace," he conturning to his friend, "what is that said about now?"

ilding a frigate, and initiating his cousins the mysteries of rigging a vessel. I benuch more to his own amusement and ion than theirs," replied Tulk, "even s half tired of him."

leed! but I see how it is,—young ladies stiated with a new pleasure. I shall be a is for a short period again now, and, of charming in their eyes. I hope the worthy is well?"

ite, Stracy, indeed I do not think the of any of your friends has suffered mate1 your absence."

a delight me," said his lordship, laughing, all me—" Here his farther enquiries were pted by the Earl, who reminded him that already late, and he had yet the duties of

the toilette to perform; whereupon, he immediately left the room, followed by Tulk and his brother, with both of whom the reader may ere this have discovered he was a kind of magnet—In fact, although often in disgrace with different members of his family, Stracy was their common interest—their key-stone—each and all feeling the void created by his absence.

"What a nuisance it is, Horace," said he, "that these people are here. I hate doing the civil in the country—how long do they stay?"

"They are of so little importance to me, that I have never thought of asking. Do not you know, Algernon?"

"A fortnight, I think," replied his brother, but you will not be much troubled with them, for Sir James lives in the fields with my father, Lord Power in the music room with my sisters, and his brother in the stable with his groom."

"Well disposed of, Algernon; but still my greatest annoyance remains; how do you employ Miss Carbuncle? I detest her."

"Oh! I am quite ignorant on that subject. Horace has kept me so tight in hand, lately, that I have had no time to look after the young ladies—I always make the best of my way to Harry Beresford, when I get out."

"Well, then, I will tell you what she doesthough I have only just arrived-she is always weaving and spreading her nets to catch a husShe set her cap at me in Paris, but I am agacious a bird to be caught by a little chaff; I do not like to be forced to pay her atten-

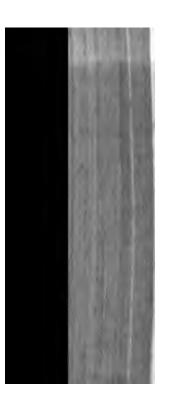
ce, "she seems a clever and amiable girl."
did not know I was disparaging a friend of
Tulk's," said the young nobleman, with
submission. "Shall I soon have the pleaof drinking your wife's health?"

low can you go on so, Stracy?—I suppose I t liberty to give my opinion of a lady with ach impunity as yourself."

'ertainly, only you are so circumspect in al; but there is the dinner bell, by Jove!—
, go out of my way, I want all my room to lf now—I have wasted all my time in talko you; and say I shall be down in the ling of an eye, Algernon," he added, as the closed upon his friends.

evening passed away with Stracy, in ag one of the group which formed around arp of Miss Carbuncle, where all openly ad, at the same time, that many criticized, or need, the brilliant strains. Educated by ly parents, with the sole object of marrying tageously, this young lady paraded her aplishments, only for the purpose of capting.

was the youngest of three sisters, who had



ni lokei wate catem of a continuent men had been dampit. ing the advantages, is barter ber liberty. Lai dismissal, when they after some time, to a respecting them. Naples, had been tried i ance commensurate wit she had now arrived at two-and-twenty, thoug friends insinuated that. years the mark would ! without having any im tling. Lord Stracy, she prize, and, consequently quent meetings, she had him, with an assiduity w defeated her object; fc from the idea of matrime a liberty he prized; and

eld in sleep. The countess received her, ch urbanity, in the room that for the s to be the retreat where she was to ninds of her pnpils; but the timid girl hat lady started, as her quick eye ran outhful, shrinking form of the embryo. Lady Trefoil, however, sent for her after a few minutes' conversation with ructress, and, having presented them to he study to rejoin her friends.

entham was particularly fond of the soildren, and exerted herself to remove the adies Helen and Charlotte appeared to of her, but in vain; she could only elicit ables from them, during the hour and spent together that evening; and with welling with the loneliness of her senat this early stage of her trial, she or pillow, which, cavil not reader, if she il with her tears—for she was only

CHAPTER XII.

Hope, like the glimmering taper's light, Adorns and cheers the way: And still as darker grows the night, Emits a brighter ray.

GOLDSMITH.

BRIGHTLY shone the sun on the succeeding morning; and Margaret rose with renewed spirit to meet her new duties. It was the desire of Lady Trefoil that her hitherto untutored children should be led, by degrees, to follow a regular course of study, and to learn obedience, and gain knowledge, by gentle means; therefore Margaret, who was all tenderness, determined to excite the affection of her little pupils before she made requisitions on their duty. They were perfectly untrained, she soon discovered, as well from her own observation, as from the hints of Lady Clara; who kindly undertook, on the morning after Miss Bentham's arrival, to give her every information in her power, relative to the management of her sisters.

rgaret was to have entire control over her l-room, subject only to the inquisition of ountess; whose manners gave her no very able idea of her superintendence, and her se augmented as the prospect of her occus became more clearly defined. Lord's voice, calling his sister to accompany id Miss Carbuncle in a walk to Brookside, ipted her pleasing interview, and she liately prepared to adopt Lady Trefoil's stion of a ramble with the little girls; who pated much pleasure in leading her to their ite haunts.

d Stracy, unable to avoid paying some ion to his father's guests, and, at the same anxious, for more than one reason, to go to in Beresford's, resolved to make his walk both purposes; therefore, after having Mr. Power over his newly arrived kennel, turned with him to the house, in order to pany Miss Carbuncle in her walk, accordo an engagement formed at the breakfast

Joined by Lord Power, who was now antly in the train of Lady Clara, the party set forth; and, after sauntering the woods of Highfield for an hour o, they entered the grounds of Captain ford.

fear, my dear sir, you will think we are

taking an undue liberty in advancing upon you with so large a party this morning," said Lady Clara, as she lightly tripped into the room by the open window, where that gentleman was sitting; "but" she added, playfully turning to her companions, "you know young people are apt to follow heedlessly, when gaiety and folly lead the way; and Stracy would not be persuaded to spare you the infliction of his society."

"I am ever happy to see you, and your friends, my dear Lady Clara," returned their host; "but where is Lord Stracy?"

"Here, sir," said the young nobleman, also entering the apartment. "I was endeavouring to separate the chaff from the wheat of my sister's address. I suppose, Clara," he continued, as he cordially shook Captain Beresford by the hand; "you intend to typify yourself by folly, as gaiety is certainly my property."

"Oh! I disclaim them equally, I assure you, brother mine," replied her ladyship; "you are welcome to both."

"Your ladyship," said Lord Power, with a bow, "should have given us credit for following gaiety and grace; which would have been infinitely more flattering to us all."

"Oh! I left that on purpose for you, my Lord; well knowing what an adept you are at compliments." Stracy, who had been speaking to Caperesford, now said, "Well, I shall goth of Harry; I find he is down by the

not you go also, Lady Clara?" inquired rbuncle, anxious not to lose an opporf joining Egerton.

sink not, Arabella," returned she; "I st fatigued, and, unless Captain Beresls us an intrusion, I shall remain here erton's return."

warmly assured, by her host, of the her society would afford him, Miss Carpurpose was defeated, and Lord Stracy alone for the scene of his friend's ent.

rt ten minutes brought our hero to the the stream, where Harry was engaged cousins; and, as he hastily advanced, his name murmured by more lips than young Beresford, in accents of pleasure. said his Lordship, after a quarter of had slipped away in a rapid series of and answer; "well, suppose we return ouse, my sister and her party will be impatient?"

is Lady Clara waiting for us?" ex-Jessy Murray; "really, my Lord," she not mention, before, that she had accompanied you."

- "How could I think of any thing but you, at first, Miss Murray, and your kind reception," said Stracy, gallantly; "I assure you I believe I almost forgot I had a sister."
- "Your Lordship must then permit me to say you were unkind, both to Lady Clara and myself, for her visits afford me sincere pleasure, and I am jealous of the time she is so kind to give us."
- "Nay, Miss Murray, you will make me a monster of cruelty. I did think," he said with a laugh, "that I was a person of more consequence than my sister; but it seems I was mistaken. What think you, Harry?"
- "I cannot flatter you," returned the young sailor; "for Jessy always says what she thinks."
- "We are alike in that respect, Miss Murray, though the causes of our candour are opposite; mine is the consequence of folly, Lady Clara would tell you; and yours, of conviction."
- "Your good opinion is gratifying, my Lord," returned Miss Murray; "but allow me to say you underrate your sister's towards yourself. Lady Clara is too kind to conceive an idea to the prejudice of any of her friends."

Their near approach to the house put an end to farther conversation, and the whole party

lightful hour together, previous to the Highfield part of it had promised to d join their seniors in the afternoon's

ara detailed, with much satisfaction account of a contemplated concert, hastily been arranged the previous the young people, and as readily on the part of their parents.

o take place at the close of the folek, and to consist entirely of private

nd Susan must come and assist us," adyship to the Misses Murray; "I our uncle will not object."

nat I am convinced of," said Harry; may include me among the performers, a; for I shall be a valuable acqui-

at way, Harry?" asked Jessy in surthought you did not know a note." volunteer you know," returned her chly; "is worth ten picked men. e the bass in 'Cease rude Boreas," the boatswain's whistle in genuine

icient performer, indeed, Harry, my his noble friend; "but you will be ith or without your call; remember to the Percival wood to-morrow at five; we shall be punctual, and bring Nelson," he added in a louder tone, as the group receded from the spot, where they had left their three cousins.

That evening, whilst at the dinner-table, Horace Tulk happened to inquire after several friends, whom he supposed Lord Stracy had seen during his absence; and among others mentioned the name of William Gurney.

"Oh!" said his Lordship, laughing; "he was in an abyss of despair, when I left him; for the young lady he had raved about the last month, had justly given him his coup de grace."

"That is not of much consequence," replied the other coolly; "for he will soon solace himself with the charms of the first girl who is young and foolish enough to believe his vows; and who flatters his vanity."

"You are unmerciful, Mr. Tulk. Gurney is not so heartless as you give him credit for; he has his faults, but he is a very good fellow, I assure you."

"I hope I am mistaken, Stracy, I am always happy to acknowledge the excellence of another."

"You will have an opportunity of doing so soon then, as he is coming to this part of the country shortly, and I will warn him of the danger he incurs of losing the esteem of Mr. Tulk, unless he mends his manners; doubtless he will be deeply concerned."

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Horace coloured high at these ironic but he made no answer; for the Earl, been listening to the conversation, hope, Stracy, you have not invited Gurney here?"

- "No, my Lord, he is coming to Lord A his uncle."
- "I am sorry for it—I am sorry for i your example can do him no good, as do you much harm."
 - "Really, sir, you do him injustice."
- "Well! you will find out, my boy you or I are right. I hope, for y Gurney is not what I suspect."
- "I am sure I hope so also, sir, the not know what you fear for me; I acquainted with him, and beyond his be gay, I do not see what you can disappr
- "You will be wiser some day, St turned his father coolly, rising as he the withdrawal of the ladies.
- "But never more anxious than I a retain my father's favour, sir," sai warmly.

A smile of affection played over the the Earl, as he looked upon Stracy' countenance; and he felt that his son his faults, was still the affectionate and child of his lost Clara; a wife he had though perhaps with less doting force

he did the lady who now called him husband. Some days slipped away in the pursuit of amusement, Jessy and Susan with Harry Beresford, were constantly in the society of their noble friends, and Stracy's time was so fully occupied that he had not leisure to call at the Bailiff's cottage; although he had frequently passed the

favourite tree.

Miss Carbuncle still continued to aim at his conquest, but he, with characteristic carelessness, paid her as much, or as little attention, as it suited him.

gate, and even pulled a rose from Hannah's

Sometimes she thought his manner indicated a heart nearly won; and at others, as he listened with apparent gratification to the conversation of Jessy, her hopes seemed fallacious, and vanished for the moment, only to be renewed the next time he offered her his arm in a walk, or praised her painting, or her music. She knew he had a character for instability, but fashion softens down faults of that kind, while rank, beauty, and wealth, most pleasingly acted as a corrective.

Stracy, however, was in no danger of being taken in any nets she might spread, he was far too wary, or too fickle; a tender look was enough to put him on his guard; and although he loved to feel himself admired, and courted, he took good care his attention should not be sufficiently

marked to any girl in particular, to induce the blief that he contemplated matrimony.

Unfortunate Arabella! all her toils were insuftient to win this gay breaker of hearts, though trifled with those of others, à son grè. Her tacks served only to amuse him, without eating either his love or his pity; for he was o much accustomed to be regarded as a star in sown sphere, to care about Miss Carbuncle. Poor little thing," he said, one day to his ster, to whom he was remarking the general siduity of her friend in this particular; "poor ttle thing! she does not know, apparently, how sagreeable she makes herself."

"And you do not know how difficult you are, racy," said Lady Clara, smiling.

"Well! that is the first time I have been cused of that, Clara," returned his Lordship, itting his arm affectionately round her waist; my other friends would say just the contrary; it you are a dear girl, and if it be really true at I am difficult, it is because I have formed my iterion of excellence by my sister."

"What do you expect me to say to such a mpliment, Stracy?" returned she, laughing, and sengaging herself from him, "applaud your ste, I suppose—what a pity it was not offered the lady of your love, instead of so near a lation as myself!"

"Oh! my compliments would all die a natural

death, were I to reserve them for my true love—that is an article not easily to be met with."

"You have never sought it in the right way, Stracy," said Horace, as he entered the room, having overheard his friend's speech, "and because you are blind to its perfections, you fancy there is a scarcity of it."

"Are you going to read us a lecture, or an essay upon the tender passion, my fine fellow? I did not know you were an adept that way, but I am all attention, ever ready to listen to the voice of instruction—proceed."

"You are a perfect Mercurio, Egerton."

"Infinitely indebted, Horace; but come to the music-room, both of you, Lady Trefoil sent me to find you, Clara."

"Really, Stracy, you should have told me so earlier, we have wasted full a quarter of an hour."

"Your conversation was so interesting I could not resolve upon curtailing it."

"Why—you must be trying the effect of your civilities upon me, Egerton, én attendant Lady Stracy. Do you not think so?" Horace to whom she addressed herself, smiled, doubtingly.

"I should rather fancy," he said, "he is so accustomed to barter such commodities indiscriminately for a smile, that he hardly knows when he atters them."

"You are a privileged person, Tulk,—yet tell not in Gath."

The eyes of the young men met for an instant, i, having reached the music-room door, Lord acy waved his hand, and passed out upon the ace.

lowly he walked along, for once, in deep 1ght; for Horace's words had testified a secret wledge of his proceedings, which he little sected; his looks confirmed it, and how had ained such information?

ow, although Stracy was not ashamed of ding his precious time in the unprofitable ner he had done, since his family's arrival at hield, he was ashamed of its publicity; partly use he valued the good opinion of his friends, partly because he dreaded his father's dissure. Unless Horace had some inkling of follies, why had he used such pointed and ded language?

ould any one have vented their ill-will against in his absence, and intimated his proceedings is father?

Well! I will ask Horace point blank," exned he, mentally, "I hate a false friend, who s like a snake in the grass."

ut this determination was forgotten, almost oon as formed, for Lord Stracy never entered an angry feeling many minutes, and, in eral, a moment was sufficient for the birth, life, and death, of his indignation, and he never asked Horace a single question on the subject.

Notwithstanding his suspicion of some evil hanging over him, he bent his steps to Prior's dwelling; but, ere he reached it, the merry voices of his little sisters caught his ear, and, in another moment, they were bounding towards him, like young fawns.

"Oh! Stracy, dear Stracy," they exclaimed, "how long it is since we have had a walk with you; not since Miss Bentham has been here: now do come with us to see poor Hannah."

"But perhaps Miss Bentham will not give me leave to join your party, Helen," he said, bowing as he spoke, to the young governess, whose colour was for an instant heightened, as his eye rested on her.

"Oh! yes, I am sure she will, will you not, Miss Bentham? I know you will soon love Stracy."

Margaret again blushed at this innocent assurance. But she said, "If his Lordship wishes you to walk with him, my dear, I can have no objection, I will wait here for you."

"Oh! but you must come and deliver mama's message to poor Hannah."

"Another time will do as well."

"I beg I may not interfere with your avocations, Miss Bentham," resumed Egerton.

... Margaret, finding it more pointed to shun the

y of Stracy than to allow him to accoms sisters, consented to go to the cottage, ing the hand of her youngest pupil, led towards their destination.

words from Lady Helen told her brother Hannah had been during his absence, mmediately determined, in his own mind, as to that source he owed any mischief the exist.

can go to Hannah without me," he said, after hearing this account.

no," cried the children, "you will play trick if we let you go, so do come."

admirable indifference, he entered the rden, and, although burning to know more ah, he coolly employed himself in divest-China rose-tree of its faded blossoms, s companions performed their errand.

annah attended her kind visiters to the spite of their remonstrances, she caught see of her young master, and a deadly overspread her countenance; yet she rm, and curtsied humbly, when Stracy at her.

y forbade him to approach her at that, for his manner must have betrayed the he felt, and he quitted the spot with as enchalance as when he came.

nour he consumed in strolling with his seemed the longest he had ever been

doomed to endure, and, before its close, Jessy and Harry met them; the latter all spirits; the former all amiability.

Miss Murray was immediately led up to Margaret, by her riotous pupils, and unceremoniously introduced, with, "Miss Murray, do come and see our new governess, Miss Bentham."

"That is a name I am well acquainted with," said Jessy, kindly, pitying the distress and embarrassment visible on the countenance of the stranger; for Margaret, not used to the world, had not yet overcome the change of her situation, or smothered those feelings of diffidence consequent upon her age and retired education; "and I must indulge the hope of finding a relation for our friend Lorrimer in Miss Bentham."

"Lorrimer! my brother," exclaimed Margaret, with much animation, "do you indeed know him? Oh! where is he, Miss Murray?" then, as if ashamed of having betrayed so much eagerness, she added, with a blush, "pardon me, madam, but I am unacquainted with my brother's present station, and am anxious on his account."

Margaret's announcement acted like a talisman; Harry and Jessy rapidly interrogated the shrinking girl, and, in return for her scanty information of having lost, or mislaid the card given her, by her brother, on the night of her father's decease, and her consequent distress, they told her, that Lieutenant Bentham had been the constant friend

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of Harry from boyhood,—that Brooksi been his frequent home when ashore, si father's rejection, and that he was now West Indies, after having desired his fr forward any communication, from where he had lately resided, to any part of the w might be in.

Tears, delighted tears, of joy, the first shed for months, rolled over the long dark of Margaret's eyes, at this unexpected this welcome discovery of kind friends; as heartfelt gratitude, the orphan mentally a her Maker for his mercy, even at that at moment!

Such a strain as the conversation now rewas not one to maintain coldness, or and Margaret soon found herself conversithe case of old acquaintanceship—with the valued and appreciated the brother shess loved.

Over and over again, Harry expatiated excellence of Lorrimer—his gallantry—h rosity—his amiability, were in turn set glowing colours, by the voice of friendsh Margaret enjoyed more pure delight in t space, that this happy party were left unm than had fallen to her lot, we think we m for years. Alas! why should maturity an course with the world destroy that wa feeling which in early youth is so beaut

replete with enjoyment, yet so frequently and harshly restrained!

Broken faith, betrayed affection, and many other evils—the effects of experience, teach the aged to weigh the characters of new acquaintance before they offer their friendship, while the young and innocent seize with avidity the first dazzling advances of kindness, and not unfrequently meet with disappointment and unkindness.



HIGHFIRLD TOWER.

CHAPTER XIII.

Oh! then let us drain, while we may, draughts o
Which from passion like ours may unceasingly
Let us pass round the cup of love's bliss in full r
And quaff the contents as our nectar below.

After some time, when they had again towards Captain Beresford's, H met them, and Stracy silently rem Jessy encountered him with reservables had manifested great cor-

For an instant, the thought crosse that she courted the Lord, and repelle but then he recollected the natural ing of her character, and he almost felt some cause had occurred, in his a making them less friendly.

Lord Stracy had taken a great far Murray, even from their first introdulated paid her a larger portion of atteit was his custom to offer to young general—and that even was sufficient knows! to delude any unfortunate girl, anxious to entrap a husband; for he acknowledged the superiority of her intellectual acquirements.

Though so wild and thoughtless, he had been insensibly drawn into the tranquillity of her invalid uncle's domestic circle, by the gratification of being in her society; and, had not Lord Stracy been so notoriously fickle, his friends might have indulged themselves in the idea that he was likely to form a more serious attachment than had hitherto been his aim.

Miss Bentham, after having expressed her unqualified pleasure at the prospect of soon seeing her brother; who, her new friends informed her, would return to England the first opportunity, in consequence of ill health; and also having promised to write to him directly, begged to decline an introduction to Captain Beresford that morning; and, taking her leave, summoned her charges to accompany her home.

"A neat little craft, that," said Harry, as Margaret turned to put her design into execution. "What think you, my Lord?"

Egerton, who had, more than once, almost put the young governess out of countenance during the walk, by the ardency of his gaze, said, gaily, "Why, to answer you in your own style, Beresford. I must say she is a clipper; but I have found her so demure, until to-day, that I hardly thought she could be so animated."

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"I have often heard Bentham speak of the highest terms, and I regret that my going cruise is so nearly at an end, as I have liked to make her acquaintance."

"I shall have much pleasure in doing you, Harry, my boy; but I did not kno leave was so nearly expired."

"The day after your concert, I must be weigh for London, where I shall stay previous to joining."

During the time that the two young me conversed, Horace and Miss Murray had d into the rear, and, when Harry turned to the latter, he said, "Holla! what the c in the wind now, our friends have parte pany? Jessy! Tulk! where away, my he added.

No answer was returned, however, an Stracy remarked, with a smile, as he to friend by the arm and drew him onward,

"That probably the deserters would not him a vote of thanks for endeavouring minate what might be a concerted m Nay, Harry," he added, "do not le indignant, I am not in the secret; it is conjecture."

"It is well it is so, my Lord; neverthe shall put my helm up, and stand after the

Arguments were vain — Harry depar search of his cousin, and Stracy determi gratify his impatience to know what had occurred at Prior's humble dwelling.

Before gaining it, however, the bailiff himself crossed his young Lord's path, and completely frustrated his intentions, by passing on to the cottage, after having saluted Stracy.

A muttered exclamation of vexation escaped our hero, but, finding it useless to hesitate longer that day, in the hope of seeing Hannah, he wisely made his way home, trusting to fortune being more propitious on the morrow. A trifling circumstance next morning warned him of his visits to the cottage being known and disapproved of, for one of his little sisters told him, as an event to be regretted, "that now Hannah's cross old aunt had come to take care of her, she and her sister never got any sugar, or jam. And I do so love sweet things, you know, Stracy," continued the child, fondly laying her little face against the cheek of her brother, upon whose knee she was sitting. The thought instantly occurred to him that, by making Helen the innocent means of communication between himself and Hannah, he might procure an interview with her, and at the same time elude the vigilance of this argus aunt, who was, doubtless, domiciliated in Prior's house, in order to watch over his daughter's conduct. An explanation he was determined to have, and therefore, after coinciding with the complainant, in the



leplored, he said, "Suppose you were ssage from me to Hannah, Pussy; s I might persuade her to get hold int's keys!"

ou?" said the little girl, with eyes alf with pleasure, and half in-

ry," said the wily Stracy.

, then, I will say any thing you

nen, next time your mama sends you t me know; but you must not tell I shall forget my promise."

may I not tell Charlotte? it will much."

ook his head, gravely. "One word te charm, so take care; silence and

rill be so cunning. Ah! what a good u are," interrupted Helen, pressing e with her two little hands, and

that will do, little flatterer," he anng and setting her down; "be off s Bentham. I am going over to——Power, so I cannot spend more time exed."

ran away, with a merry laugh, and proceeded on his ride.

, and the next, passed without any

progress being made by our wild friend, towards accomplishing his meeting with Hannah.

The day fixed for the concert was arrived, and the morning was consumed in the rehearsal of the evening's entertainment; for which a large party of friends had been invited.

Lord Stracy, intent upon his own less creditable pursuits, had seldom made one in the music room, but, this morning being unfavourable for amusement out of doors, he sauntered, in quest of society, into the receptacle of dulcet sounds, as soon as he had performed the task of reading the paper to the Earl; an unusual duty, which had been imposed upon him, most probably because his father saw he was unemployed.

As his Lordship approached the room, the tone of a strange voice struck his ear—he listened—it was exquisitely sweet, but rather weak, and tremulous; yet, as it warbled 'The last rose of summer,' to the strains of a guitar, Egerton thought he had never been so charmed; and, on the conclusion of the song, he hastily entered, to ascertain who was the vocalist.

Lady Clara, with Miss Bentham, Lord Power, and the children, tenanted the apartment, and Margaret it was who had been the performer, for the strings of the instrument she held yet vibrated with her scientific touch.

"Ah! sing me that again, sweet ladies, an you love me;" cried he, as he entered, "that

Toice has drawn me to your dominions. In indulge me, Miss Bentham," he pursued, ingly.

garet, whose cheeks were suffused with s, which heightened rather than detracted er beauty, said, "Lady Clara requested ie song, my lord."

l really you will be so cruel as to me—me, the brother of Lady Clara — one only one more, Miss Bentham."

wer," he exclaimed, as he turned gaily to bleman, "I am quite jealous of you—how procure this favour?"

Lady Clara I am indebted," returned the miling, "she is my beneficent deity."

- ! pray do not exalt me into anything so as an idol, my lord," returned she, play'Pray, Miss Bentham, put a stop to these ies, and fine speeches of these gentlemen.
 'ather, too, is clearing, so I hope we shall e our ride."
- pressed, Margaret complied, and Lord highly applauded, although, from some she could ill explain, her tremor was even than it had previously been, and, to her ncy, she sang less skillfully than before. e are to have the pleasure of your perice to night, I hope," said his lordship, concluded.
- 1! no, my lord, Lady Trefoil has accepted cuse."

"Our friends in general would not, did they know the loss they will sustain."

"I have never sung in public, my lord, and am not in spirits to begin now," returned she, taking up her music books, and turning, to leave the room. "Come, Ladies Charlotte and Helen, let us return to the school-room," she continued, "it is almost two o'clock."

"You will allow me to take charge of your burthen," said Egerton, putting his hand upon the book, as he opened the door to permit her egress. She would fain have refused, but his manner was decided, and, with a slightly heightened colour, she allowed him to accompany her to the apartment sacred to his sisters' studies.

Once there, the little ladies appeared determined not to lose so favourable an opportunity for displaying their newly acquired books and toys to their favourite brother; and, for some minutes, his attention was repeatedly under demand with "Egerton do look at this, Egerton see here," or "Egerton! is not this pretty?" while our hero, with his accustomed goodness, paid attention to all.

Finding that his lordship was inclined to usurp the study, Margaret made demonstrations for retiring, which Stracy no sooner observed than he rose, and, endeavouring to disengage himself from his sisters, would have retreated, when Lady Trefoil entered, and, after a gesture of sur-

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prise at his appearance, said "What doing here, Stracy?"

"Taking a first lesson in the element tural History, my dear madam," retu smiling, and placing a little volume in h "and also enacting the baby to admirati have no idea of my aptitude—but I wa point of making my bow."

"I fancy you must be a great interribusiness, you are so idle yourself," reladyship, in a tone of good-natured repr

"I hope then you will pity me, and fu with employment. I am always ready to bidding, Lady Trefoil."

"It is very often more troublesome work for another, than to do it one-se her ladyship, "however, you may ge some flowers, if you like, as it is still t for me to walk."

"That I will willingly do, if your lady let me take Helen with me; she is a votary of Flora."

"Can I trust you, Stracy, to keep he mischief? I hardly think I can."

"Oh! I will be so good, mama," u little girl, "that Stracy shall have no I may go, may I not, mama?"

"I will try you both this once, then, haste and prepare. Now, Stracy, rem depend upon your keeping her in order."

"Believe me deeply sensible of your confidence," returned he, laying his hand upon his heart, as he left the study, full of his determination of communicating with Hannah, by means of Helen.

A few words, craving a meeting with her, under a particular tree in the wood, the following afternoon, traced on a leaf from his pocket-book, prepared for his little Mercury to give the bailiff's daughter, occupied his pocket; but, during the time that he was collecting the flowers with the child-playing with her, and at times taking her in his arms, or on his shoulder, to reach some peculiar spray, a feeling of repugnance to implicate his innocent sister, however distantly, in so questionable an affair, when she had been committed to his care, by degrees took possession of his mind, and he resolved that he would forego his scheme altogether, rather than give her one more idea, which might tend to indue her with thoughts derogatory to the artlessness of infancy.

With this intention, when they drew near the cottage, he was not displeased when Helen said that, as they were going to ask Hannah for some of her late roses, she supposed he could ask her himself, to get her aunt's keys?

"Yes—yes, I will settle all that," returned the brother, glad to get her to resign the commission so readily. ng Helen by the hand, while she now basket of flowers, he entered the garden ped lightly at the window.

ah and her aunt were both in the room; r immediately advanced, and opened the t, inquiring, with respect, the pleasure of hip.

briefly stated his errand, and the old out on her bonnet, which happened to be side her, to accompany him.

', now, Egerton," whispered Helen, with riness than he had given her credit for, unt entered the passage with the intenpining him, "tell her now."

th, who had been working assiduously, or eyes, which Stracy perceived were full

nah," said he, softly, as he dropped the side the window, "do not fail me;" he a louder tone, "here is a little petir some of your sweets, shall I leave her?"

certainly, my lord," said she, rising, and lacing her foot upon the note, to conceal er aunt, who was now standing beside acy, ready to follow him and get the

le glance told him he was understood, g his sister in at the window, he left her minutes, to the care of Hannah, and was soon furnished with what he wanted, only as a cloak to his real intentions; for the numerous and rare exotics in the hot and greenhouses might much better have answered his purpose.

His end being gained, he gaily recrossed the park with Helen, and was praised by Lady Trefoil, for his successful provision of flowers so late in the season.





HIGHFIELD TOWER.

CHAPTER XIV.

"Common as light is love, And its familiar voice wearies not ever."

LADY Trefoil no sooner saw the door sh her step-son, than she said, "I wish to h minutes' conversation with you, Miss and shall be happy to seize this opp therefore request you will send Lady to her sister."

This announcement startled our fair I she dispatched the child, and then list more sorrow than surprise, while the told her that she did not think that her would suit Margaret, or, rather, than not exactly suited to the situation. I Trefoil said, was an obstacle she could come; she had requested her friend in to procure her an instructress for her but had omitted to specify her years, a

tunately, she had consequently the vexation to see a person arrive to fill the office who was at least seven or ten years under the age her ladyship had determined upon. Still, while commenting upon the impossibility of combatting the untoward circumstance of Margaret's youth, Lady Trefoil expressed her entire satisfaction regarding her, in every other respect, which was even more distressing than if many faults had been found, and Margaret pleaded for an extended trial, which her amiable patroness at length acceded to, and in the hope of being able, by vigilance and attention, to compensate for other deficiencies, she was again made happy. the frankness of youth, she told Lady Trefoil the way in which she was situated with respect to her brothers—the abandonment of the one, and the absence and expected return of the other.

The worthy lady was so highly interested by the account, which she heard from this young and simple-minded female, that it was not until Stracy's return that she recollected that she had full employment for her time elsewhere, until the arrival of her friends that evening.

It is not our purpose to detail the events of the concert minutely.

It was every thing an amateur concert should be; general satisfaction appeared to be diffused; every thing went off well; and, for once, a party left no regret behind. The Earl was urbane, standing a twinge of the gout; the Connurteous; while Lord Stracy flirted with ung lady that came in his way, though it are been observed that his eyes followed overment of Miss Bentham.

Clara was the object of Lord Power's narked attentions, and Horace seemed ave than usual, though he contrived to Jessy Murray as soon as she was distand, and, for the moment, seemed more

little circumstances, however, passed d by the general throng; for each was h occupied by his own affairs to regard his neighbour, unless it might be some dear, delightful spinsters who, having that period "which certain people call nage," and having lost their own chance imony, amuse themselves in prying into cople's affairs; hatching marriages out of, or a smile, and rejection from as great; who call the truant blood into the soft of youth, by the fixed unfeeling stare of y, upon the accidental collision of two who they fancy have a preference for her.

here are, we hope, and indeed know, many it "old maids," worthy good creatures, ould no more play the spy, or offend the feelings of any one, than they would commit deliberate sin, and, doubtless, on the evening in question, Highfield Tower could boast of some of each character.

However this may be, the concert passed away, and the morrow rose big with its own peculiar events; for Sir James and Lady Carbuncle, with their disappointed daughter, were to take their leave for London at an early hour; somewhat later, Harry Beresford would depart, by chaise; and at four o'clock Stracy had to keep his appointment with Hannah Prior.

The Baronet's carriage was announced at ten; but it was verging on twelve o'clock when they drove off.

Stracy left the Honourable Mr. Power to conduct Miss Carbuncle, while he put her mother into the vehicle. Arabella looked reproachful, even distressed, but her tormentor was callous to her chagrin, and could scarcely forbear a smile, as she leaned forward to gain a last view of him, as the horses spurned the gravel beneath their hoofs. A general salutation from the gentlemen took place, and Egerton said, with a joyous laugh, "That girl looks as if she had been crossed in love. Faith! I think she will die of this evil before next season, if some fool does not take compassion on her. do you say to making up to her, Power? good family; fortune so-so; but then you will have the satisfaction of doing a favour."

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not in a charitable humour," returned thip; "beside, she would not look at has been setting her cap at you the ight, Stracy."

eve you, Power; but d—— me if she me. I'm not a marrying man. Come, you for this morning?"

said Lord Power, "I am engaged to foil and your sister."

to do a bit of civil, eh, my Lord?"
cy; "then suppose we go and see
off," added he to Mr. Power, Horace,
non, who were standing around him.
etter was demanded, and the four took
to Brookside, leaving Lord Power to
ender tale."

Beresford's conveyance was at the en his friends arrived; his baggage g arranged, and he himself, with a his hand, stood on the steps. He luted all, and, tossing his packet to the who was stowing his valuables, led ugh the hall into the room where his d cousins were, each engaged in his ne way or another.

the latter was fastening up his dresshis worthy father had just sealed a introduction he was to present in o an old friend of the Captain's, lately while Jessy, the quiet, gentle Jessy, was equally busy in renovating his mutilated gloves.

Harry's great flow of spirits had vanished, a kind of subdued tenderness marked his deportment, and he said, as he entered, and noticed their various avocations,

"Is not all this kind solicitude for a man's comfort, enough to make him the most selfish rogue possible."

"Why, really," said Stracy, "I hardly know whether you are justified in being so; what if they are delighted to be rid of you."

"No! that I will not believe, my Lord; and I am sure I see two pair of bright eyes ready to repel your doubt."

"Yes, indeed," answered Jessy; "it is one equally unworthy Harry and ourselves."

"For my part," cried Susan, "I would not take as much trouble to please any one, except my uncle, as I have to make Harry happy since he has been at home."

"You mistake, I hope, Susey," returned her cousin, slyly; "there is one other friend, surely you have forgotten."

"Oh no, I have not," returned she, blushing deeply.

"That friend must be me," said Stracy, with feigned confidence.

"Indeed, Lord Stracy, you are too presumptuous; you are much more Jessy's friend than mine, and I know Mr. Tulk will say so." "I believe Stracy would be a friend to all the vorld, were it possible," answered Horace, zolly.

"Well, now, Tulk, that is one of the few civil things you ever said of me. I might, perhaps, view it in a questionable light, but I am so happy to receive the shadow of a compliment, that I will not look on the black side; I assure you I feel duly honoured."

Captain Beresford having spoken a few words to his son, recommended his departure, and the whole party immediately surrounded the young sailor, and, with many a hearty shake of the hand, wished him a pleasant voyage, and a safe and happy return. "Come, my pretty cousins," he said, with forced gaiety, "I shall have plenty of salt-water in a few days, so to spare me at present. God bless you all. Stracy! remember my friend Lorrimer Bentham, when he arrives."

"He shall be placed next to yourself, Harry, is my estimation," said his friend.

His companions followed him to the posthaise; he sprung in, his favourite Nelson suceeded; the door shut, and off went the embryo dmiral, on his way to the Mediterranean.

"Oh! what a mortal pity he is gone," sighed lgernon, as the rattle of the wheels became distinct, "such a rare good fellow."

This unsophisticated speech called forth a

laugh from the party in general; and for some time the young men prolonged their visit, and diverted the attention of their fair friends from the contemplation of the loss they had sustained.

As soon as Stracy and his friends had departed, Lord Power joined the Countess and Lady Clara, with whom he perambulated the flower garden, until the former requested them to continue their walk alone, as she had various orders to issue to her gardener, which would occupy some time. Her companions would willingly have waited her leisure, but her Ladyship pleaded fatigue as an additional excuse for not accompanying them; and consequently the young people proceeded without her to the apiary.

After having inspected the various hives, and watched the sluggish labours of the tiny colonists, which were now becoming partially torpid from the advance of the season, Lady Clara said, "I fear, my Lord, you must be quite tired of following my country amusements; they are very insipid, I must allow, in comparison to the employments of you gentlemen; but I will now release you, if you please, from your duty."

"My duty, Lady Clara," returned her companion, "is my greatest pleasure, particularly when it consists in attending you."

"()h! you are a sad flatterer," returned she, playfully; "but I know how to appreciate all

- a say. Now tell me, my Lord, why it is the ment opinion with your sex that we must a fattered to be pleased?"
- "I am no philosopher, Lady Clara," said his ordship, laughing; "but I assure you I am at such a hypocrite as you must suppose, if all say is more for effect than to accord with orth. To gain your approbation, my dear Lady lara," continued he, in a tone of much feeling, is my greatest wish."
- "You do me much honour, my Lord," anwered her Ladyship, as she cast one hasty, measy glance at Lord Power, in whose glowing countenance she read a confirmation of the mars caused by his words. "You do me much means."
- "But suffer me to add how earnestly I have mged for this moment, when I might venture say ——"
- "No, no, my Lord," interrupted she, colouring peply, and looking much distressed; "do not y any thing—I caunot listen to you."
- "But you must, you will, dear Clara," he id, seizing her hand, and pressing it, notwith-anding her resistance, to his lips. "Suffer me say, I love you; have loved you long and rvently."
- "Oh! pray, pray, my Lord," said she imploigly, as she leant still more upon him for pport; "pray leave me. Do not speak in is manner, you quite frighten me."

"Calm yourself, my sweet friend," returned the young Lord, leading her to an alcove contiguous to the apiary, and placing himself beside her, "I will not alarm you, but do not enjoin my silence on this subject. "You must know, dear Clara, I have sought your favour; and though you have not given me much encouragement, yet I feel convinced you would not have afforded me any, had you not thought kindly of me."

Lady Clara shook her head, but could not speak, from emotion, and Lord Power took advantage of her silence to pour forth the torrent of his passion, and Lady Clara, of course, was drowned in tears. To detail the rhapsody of love which followed, however, is not our intention, and it must suffice our readers to know that, after much entreaty, Lord Power obtained a faint hope of gaining his suit, though Lady Clara told him she should require time to consider his proposal, before giving him leave to speak to her father.

"I will submit to any thing, dearest Clara," said his Lordship, "with such a prospect in view—I will give you any time you wish; only have mercy upon me—but that I know you will;" and again her delicate hand was imprinted with a kiss.

"Do not be so secure, my Lord," answered she, rising to resume her walk, and endeavouring to smile through her tears, "but to-morrow you w whether you may mention this conto my father."

usand thanks, dear lady, for such a sentence—most willingly will I act r guidance."

ou will not tease me any more, until I permission?"

not your devoted slave, Clara?"

say so," replied she, with an air of which might have startled any mortal ine than a lover.

o you not believe me, Clara?"
yes—I think—I hope so."

give me an opportunity of proving it, I I am sure you will not have to "said the lover, drawing her arm is own, and leading her away in the of the house.

CHAPTER XV.

Virtue is bold, and goodness never fearful.

At least from guilt shalt thou be free, No matron shall thy shame reprove; Though careless pangs may prey on me, No martyr shalt thou be to love.

BYRON.

FOUR o'clock found our hero in the wood—the scene of his yesterday's assignation. He reached the indicated spot, and looked around with disappointment, for Hannah was not there.

How could he contrive to see her, if this plan should fail, thought he, and he pondered full five minutes over the business, in vain. "Curse the little gipsy," muttered he, as he looked wistfully in the direction of the cottage. "I wish I could exterminate that old woman."

Another five minutes dragged slowly past—his patience was exhausted, and he turned to quit the place, when he perceived Hannah tranquilly seating herself on the stump of a tree, within a few paces.

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One spring, and he reached her seizing her hand, seated himself on tree, exclaiming, "Ah! my gentle what do you not deserve for cutting infernally?"

- "You should rather enquire, my turned the peasant, drawing back I avoid the salutation he was on the conferring. "Why I came here at you were it discovered I should be ruined."
- "Ruined, Hannah," said Stracy, pr hand to his lips, "how! what does all t You are changed, since my return. shunned me, completely, and I alm would not meet me now."
- "My duty prompted me to do so but"—and the tears began to roll downwhile she allowed her hand to remain his grasp, "I thought I might be pard more seeing and speaking to you, freedom you permitted me before you Devonshire."
- "Permitted! to be sure you may. not say fifty saucy things to me every of we sat together on the bank in you garden, and I indemnified myself in ki
- "True, your Lordship was always ver of my indiscretions, which makes me a acquaint you with what happened, unafter your departure; for I feel sure,

surprise at the change in my manner, as well as the style of your note, that you are quite ignorant of it."

"You are right, Hannah, I know of no reason why I should find a change. I hear you have been ill, and your looks confirm it, but I am the same."

"I know it, my Lord," said she, in a still lower tone than that in which she had before spoken. "I know it, and that is why I feared almost to come to you."

"What, in the devil's name, do you fear in me?" said the young nobleman, impatiently; "tell me at once, and do not haul me over the coals in this way."

"I will tell you, my Lord," said Hannah, wiping her eyes, and endeavouring to steady her voice, "but pray let go my hand. I must be quick, or I shall be missed. You may remember, my Lord, that, when first you came to High-field, and took a fancy to waste your time at our cottage, I endeavoured to prevent your visits. I felt, as I do now, that I and my Lord were not fit companions, but still you would come."

"To be sure I would, notwithstanding the swinging box on the ear you gave me, the first time I stole a kiss from those rosy lips of yours, pretty one," interrupted her volatile companion, "and I hope to come very often again."

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"You must not, my Lord, indeed yo not. The Earl will turn my father premises, if you do, pray—pray do not u the cause of my father's dismissal."

"The Earl!" repeated Stracy, "does t know of my visits? Oh, tell me, quickl Hannah."

"You must promise not to interrupt n my Lord, for, as I said before, I dare not

"Well! I will be all attention, Hann deed—or I will forfeit the next kiss you give me."

Hannah coloured, but resumed as f "The day after you quitted Highfield, m the Earl came down to our cottage, and, my father was out, sent a labourer to fin saving, he wanted to speak to himentered our house -sat down, and asked or three questions, in a very severe tone frightened me very much, for he never me before. However, my father soon ca and I went away, little dreaming what a was brewing. I heard the Earl speakir loud, and thought he seemed angry, but trouble myself on that head, until my called me. The Earl was sitting where him, looking still more severe, while my appeared distressed. 'Hannah,' he said, but kindly, 'I believe you never told untruth, and I depend upon your answer

the questions I am going to ask you, with perfect' candour.' I was so frightened, my Lord, I could not answer: so he continued. 'Has Lord Strace been in the habit of coming here often lately?' I hesitated, for I thought your Lordship might not wish to have it known, but I could not betray my father's confidence, and I told him von had. 'I was sure of it,' exclaimed the Earl. 'and pray,' he said, sternly to me, 'what could Lord Stracy have to do here, madam? I suppose you invited him?' No, indeed, my Lord, I said; I requested him often to leave me, but he frequently came for flowers, which I could not refuse. 'My son,' said the Earl, with a sneer, 'is not used to look at any roses but those upon a woman's cheek. did be never tell you, you were pretty, Hannah?' My Lord! I said, affecting surprise, for I dared not answer the questions I foresaw he would next put. 'Aye,' he returned, angrily, 'did he not say he would marry you?' No, my Lord, I cried, boldly, and if he had, I should not have believed him-Lord Stracy knows his friends too well to make a promise he is sure he must break. I am aware I am not fit to be the wife of a noble-'Oh! and you only aimed at being his mistress,' returned his lordship-'perhaps you are so now?' 'My lord,' said my father, 'I cannot see my daughter insulted; giddy she may have been, but I hope she is not criminal.' 1 threw myself into the arms of my best friend. 'st into tears, for my feelings were outmy dear father pressed me in his arms,
im sure believed my truth. The Earl then
saying, 'Well, Prior, for your sake, I will
this business no farther, only let your
ther understand that, if I find that she
mages Lord Stracy in visiting her, indeed,
he do not repel him entirely, she must be rered from my property.' With those words,
Lord, the Earl left the house."

Iannah paused, her tears again flowed, and acy said, as he strove to get possession of her ad, which she refused, "How unjust! how kind of my father—I owe you a thousand aposies, Hannah, for bringing so much reproach on you—you must forgive me—I will no longer ment you, if it gets you into such terrible rapes."

- "My pardon, my lord, oh! no."
- "You will not grant it?"
- "My lord, you have not offended me."
- "But I have trifled with you—Hannah, say on forgive me."
- "Ido, indeed, I do, my lord," returned Hannah, reeping, bitterly.
- "You are a kind girl, Hannah; but, come, do not cry, tell me what caused the illness you have been suffering from?"
- "Mortification, I believe, my lord; but I am etter now," returned Hannah, as soon as she

could command her voice. Stracy looked incredulous, and she added, quickly, "you must not ask me any more, my lord, I have thrown myself on your generosity—my father's situation depends upon you, and I trust you will not be the means of his forfeiting it."

She raised her swimming eyes to him imploringly, and his lordship replied warmly—" No, by Heavens, I will not."

"I knew your kindness would induce you to listen to my request, my lord, and I also feel convinced you will acknowledge the propriety of my returning you these baubles, when I tell you I am next week—to be—married." As she spoke, she placed a small parcel in his hand, with a trembling voice, adding, "my father knows and approves this step. My lord, take them."

"Never!" returned Stracy, pushing the offering from him, "think you I want the trash,—no, Hannah, keep them to ornament your bridal—or fling them into the first pond you see. Lord Stracy does not confer any thing for the pleasure of taking it back again, when it fails to gratify."

He rose, and Hannah, surprised at his haughty manner, hesitated, ere she said, "You must now permit this interview to terminate, my Lord, and it must be our last. I fear I must brook your anger, for I cannot, must not, retain this packet."

"I have given you leave to destroy it. You are like a child, Hannah."

HIGHFIELD TOWER.

A moment's pause succeeded, when he reabruptly, holding out his hand, "Come, shake hands, Hannah, before we part. It we have had this explanation, and hope be happy—by the bye, who is the favoured

- "Oh! my Lord," sobbed his compan not ask me."
- "Why not, my poor girl," answered soothingly, placing his arm round her, 'marriage against your will?"

Ere this sentence could be answered, at our hero was essaying to pacify the you sant, who wept upon his shoulder—a was heard, and Horace Tulk, book in han before his friend—" Egerton!" he exclait the utmost astonishment.

- "Horace!" returned his Lordship, mi him, while the hot blood mounted ever temples; at the same time relinquishing of Hannah. "What in the devil's name you here?"
- "Let me ask you that question, Strac the other, coldly.
- "Your own discernment will answer should think," returned Egerton, laug conceal his mortification: "you are a terr fellow, if you do not understand the sign times."
- "My dear Lord," returned Tulk, in a tionate tone, as the terrified Hannah has

find refuge among the trees which intervened between the place of appointment and her father's cottage, "my dear Lord, let me entreat you, for that girl's sake, as well as your own, to give up this acquaintance—Do you know she is going to marry Ralph Plowden?"

"I was just informed of the fact, when you so unceremoniously intruded upon us, sir," said Stracy, somewhat haughtily, as he turned away slowly.

"Then, my dear fellow," answered Horace, following him close, "I will not do you the injustice to believe that you will continue this idle and cruel game."

"Thank you, Horace," said Stracy, ironically, "you are right; I do not intend to rival the young farmer, but I should like to know what business you had to interrupt my pleasure, for I never interfere with yours."

"The collision was quite accidental, I assure you, Stracy, but, as it has taken place, you must not be displeased, if I caution you against exciting your father's anger—he is aware of your admiration for that girl. He told me, he should turn Prior off in consequence, unless the daughter consented to be married immediately."

"I dare say my father has been very kind in publishing my misdeeds, but I beg you will not trouble yourself to recapitulate the Earl's threats, as I have heard them all, and nothing is so tedious as a twice told tale." short pause ensued, the young men continued walk side by side, without noticing each other, Stracy was vexed—angry with Horace and nself, and Tulk felt unwilling to offend his end by farther expostulation. At length orace said, "Have you seen Algernon, since m left Brookside, Stracy?"

"Not I," returned his Lordship carelessly; we do not hunt in couples. Power and he ere with Susan Murray in the garden, when I me away. You, I suppose," he added in a mtering tone, "you were so busy doing timable that you lost sight of your pupil. apid is blind you know, Horace."

Stracy commenced this speech under the influce of his transient fit of ill humour; but at its naclusion his natural amiabilty had returned, in the put his arm through that of Horace, with is usual familiarity. "The little Deity may be it, for what I care, Egerton," answered the ther; "but I should be happy if you will answer to one question, which I have sought an oppormity, in vain, for ascertaining some days."

"A question of me? not a scientific one, I ope, for that will be quite out of my way."

"No, no, Stracy, it is one easily solved."

"Out with it then, my fine fellow."

"I would not trouble you, Stracy, had not ur behaviour greatly puzzled me, since your turn from Devonshire. I thought," and here hesitated, "that when you went away, you detained a partiality for Miss Murray."

- "Well, and what if I did?"
- "I would enquire whether that partiality still exist?"
- "And pray, may I ask in return, why you are desirous to be assured of that fact?"
- "Because," returned Tulk, "you are not very stable in your fancies, and as you have changed your manner entirely the last fortnight, I wish to know whether you have any design upon her affections."
- "Are you going to stand forth as her champion, and take me to task for looking upon her with indifference? Or, what, in heaven's name, do you ask this for?"
- "I would not for the world, Stracy, interfere with any attachment of yours, but in the event of your only admiring her casually ——"
 - "You would shove in your oar, eh?"
- "I must own her attractions have fascivated ne."
- "You, Horace!" exclaimed Egerton, suddenly stopping, and turning his friend round, and holding him at arm's length, "you fascinated! ha—ha—ha! that is excellent—ha—ha—ha—ha! why, I thought your heart was arrow proof; you really must excuse me, my dear fellow; but for the soul of me, I cannot help laughing at such an avowal;" and again the wood rang with Stracy's merry voice.
- "It is, doubtless, highly flattering to be the object of your Lordship's ridicale," said Horace, with an air of pique; "it is really too bad."

"Granted, Tulk; I believe I am a great fool, but I will be serious now. What was it you asked me? Oh! I know—whether it were you or I that were fascinated by Jessy Murray?"

"Upon my word, Stracy-"

"Upon my word, Horace," interrupted Egerton, "you ask a modest man an awkward question; yet friendship demands that I should tell you that I thought, before I left home, that I really was getting over head and ears in love. I have seen so many charming creatures since then, that I am all abroad again."

"Perhaps," said Horace, "Miss Carbuncle has induced you to alter your mind?"

"No, no, I may return to Jessy when my eyes have ceased to twinkle from the dazzling beauty of the Devonshire belles, but at present—"

"Enough, enough, Stracy; I am satisfied quite," interrupted Horace, quickly. "Perhaps it is fortunate for me that I am foiled, for I am too poor to think of matrimony."

"Pooh, man, you will get a living as soon as you have completed Algernon's education."

"And pray, where can I look for such a thing, Stracy?"

"From the Earl, to be sure."

"He has already befriended me so greatly that I cannot expect it."

"Well, at all events, you shall instruct the ising generation of Stracy, my good fellow, for he sake of employment."

The approach of Mr. Power and Algernon

put a stop to farther conversation on this head; but Stracy smiled more than once, as the party walked home, when he observed the gloom which overspread Horace Tulk's countenance; for he readily guessed that he had damped his friend's hopes of possessing the hand of Jessy Murray, which his love of mischief alone had induced him to effect, as he did not intend to seek the affection of that young lady.

Generosity was one of this gay nobleman's most prominent characteristics; and he had frequently been known to do violence to his own feelings when the happiness or welfare of others had been concerned; but his fondness for fun and mischief, at times, predominated over his noble qualities, and he delighted as much in seeing the frown of disappointment, when he knew he possessed the power to dispel it, as he did the smile of pleasure.

On reaching the house, they encountered Lady Clara and Miss Bentham, and for half an hour, before retiring to prepare for dinner, Lord Stracy addressed most of his conversation to the latter, who would gladly have sought refuge in the study from his attention.

His topic was, however, so alluring, being entirely relative to Lieutenant Bentham; of whom Egerton had heard something from Harry, that she was induced to struggle against her timidity, and remain with the party; much to Egerton's satisfaction, for he already felt a angeies of delight when in her company; to

n he had hitherto been a stranger. It had innection with the respect he entertained in sensible, the talented, but reserved, Jessy ay; much less did it bear a comparison with aptivation of wealth, or beauty, or the still foolish taste for flirting. No! he was muted to hear her account of her brother's ctions—her hopes of his speedy return, and fears for his health, uttered in a tone of liar softness, without a thought of conquest, elfishness; a state far more dangerous for ate of his heart than any trial to which he hitherto been exposed.

CHAPTER XVI.

Love knoweth every form of air, And every shape of earth, And comes, unbidden, every where, Like thought's mysterious birth.

WILLIS.

- "ARE you unwell, Horace?" kindly inquired Lady Clara, as the former sat thoughtfully apart from the rest of the family, that evening; ostensibly engaged with a book, but in reality indulging his disappointed hopes with free range.
- "Me, ill; no, thank you, Clara, but why do you ask?"
- "Because you look pale and uneasy," said she, sitting down by him.
- "I think I may return the compliment," replied he, with a forced smile. "But I am quite well, I assure you."
- "Yet you cannot deny there is something the matter, Horace. Has Stracy been unkind?"
- "No, no, not unkind; it is an unavoidable circumstance," he returned, half soliloquising.

It circumstance?" urged her ladyship, let me be your physician, and prescribe id diseased."

have ever been as a sister to me, dear sjoined Horace, "but I cannot tell you annoyed me. It matters little to any lf."

must not say so, Horace, I am sure we hat interest for you which your long tion with us warrants."

ow it, Clara, I know it; I bow to your i, but, indeed, I am not in good trim for night—perhaps not well, as you say." indisposition originates I fancy from ; does it not, Horace?" asked Clara, juiet tone.

Stracy tell you so?" rejoined Tulk,

right, then," said her ladyship, without this question. "Why so reserved,

," he returned, "I did not think you trated my secret—true it is, Brookside erlative attraction for me; but it is no ing about that now."

ot understand you, Horace. Has any curred to blight your hopes in that fancied Jessy was"—Lady Clara's voice ed, she hesitated, and Horace rejoined, ear Lady Clara, to you I will own Jessy ing that is estimable in my eyes, but

unfortunately, I find I must resign my expectations."

For a moment his fair companion did not speak and, when she did so, a slight tremor was perceptible in her voice, and her tone was more tender than usual.

"Can I do anything for you?" she said, "treat me as that sister you acknowledge me to represent. Horace."

"You cannot assist me, my kind Clara; for the first time in his life, I believe Stracy has become attached—and to her—he owned it to me to day."

"I do not believe it, Horace; Stracy is too fickle, his attention too promiscuous; at least I would not have you despair. You know, Egerton's love cannot be depended upon; besides, perhaps if I chose, I might let you into a little secret; but I will not, because you are determined to look unhappy, notwithstanding my consolations," said her ladyship, smiling archly.

"Oh! Clara, if you only knew how wretched I am, you would not wonder at my being out of spirits: but here comes Stracy—you will not betray me, Clara?"

"No, no, depend upon me."

"Can you not admit me into the cabinet council, good people?" exclaimed Stracy, approaching the spot where his sister and his friend were sitting, "pray are you discussing love or politics, two very opposite subjects, to be sure, but still not improbable ones."

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believe love is so constantly in your own its, Stracy," returned his sister, "that you e it is a general topic of conversation." ou should not blush, lady fair, when you o throw any one off the scent," said his p, with a mischievous smile:—

d you know, I do not believe you?"

as you please, Stracy," answered Lady but just look at Horace, I am sure you suspect him of being a lover, with such a n his countenance."

just beg to differ—he is the very image of pointed one. Pray, do you contemplate g, shooting, or drowning, my fine fellow?" ither, for myself, Lord Stracy," returned oolly walking away, "you might spare me ony."

Jove! he is quite offended, Clara," said 1, laughing, as his outraged friend quitted m.

wonder," returned her ladyship, "you ays expending your wit upon him, and we bear raillery at all times."

ne, Clara, and doubtless our dear friend hat he was about in confiding his affaires to you. Young ladies always like to be ositories of others' hopes and fears, not enough of their own."

[&]quot;The charming creatures lie with such a grace,
There's nothing so becoming to the face."

Lady Trefoil's voice, addressing her step-daughter, interrupted, or rather concluded this bantering conversation on the part of Lord Stracy; who waited in vain for the return of Horace to the drawing-room: he did not make his appearance again that evening, and, although the young noble, intent upon reconciliation, loudly demanded admittance at Horace's door, as he passed to his own room, no answer was returned. than one serious face might have been seen at the breakfast-table, on the succeeding morning; Lady Clara returned Lord Power's salutation with unusual reserve, and the pallid check and swollen eye of the former told of a night of suffering, while Horace and his lordly friend scarcely spoke to each other.

The Earl and Countess, however, did not openly remark the species of gloom which hung around them, and sought their ordinary avocations immediately after the repast.

The morning was cold and stormy, and Mr. Power only was inclined to leave the house; being one who could not derive amusement from sedentary occupations; he took his gun, without consulting the taste of the others, and set of to walk.

Stracy soon followed Horace to the study, and then Lady Clara was left tête a tête with her lover. For a few minutes, a deep silence reigned in the apartment, the young lady busily plied her needle, and bent low over her frame, while he

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antly upon the wintry scene without, ployed with his own thoughts-now eastles in the air, and anon crushing he earth; until, feeling how awkward sition, he raised a book from a table and asked Lady Clara whether she mit him to read to her. A ready assent ed, and, for some time, Lord Power is self-imposed duty uninterruptedly. up suddenly, however, with the intenking some remark, he discovered that mpanion's eyes were fixed upon him, e crystal drop stood in either, ready to His rapid change of couns bounds. ould not pass unnoticed, and Lady ek was dyed with crimson, as he said, · volume.

I have annoyed you, dear Lady Clara."
o," she replied, with a smile, "I am
sh—nervous, I believe, I must desig-

let me put a period to your and my ense, Clara," rejoined he, taking her clasping it warmly in his. "This delay take you ill—the Earl—may I speak to r lips quivered for a moment, but she y said, "You may—" and as if alarmed t words, she hastily withdrew her hand, although the distance was inconsiderable, it was more than an hour before he reached it. In effect it was as probable he would turn to the right, when he originally proposed going to the left, as that he should find himself at the place he had intended. This was the case in the present instance, for, notwithstanding his desire to join his offended friend, he no sooner saw the schoolroom door standing open, than he was seized with a literary mania, and, entering, soon became deeply interested in the geographical lesson of his little sister.

In vain Miss Bentham endeavoured to rivet the attention of the child to the morning's business; she was bent upon displaying her little store of knowledge to her brother, and it was not until Stracy assured her Miss Bentham would turn him out of the room, unless she were attentive, that the child suffered him to do what he wished; which was, while pretending to read, to observe every movement of the young governess—to listen to her voice, and feast his eyes with the contemplation of her beauty.

Thus quietly occupied, he allowed the time to glide on, until a note was delivered to Margaret by a servant, who informed her that an answer was required. A vivid colour mounted to her cheek on its perusal; the tears started into her eyes, and she looked up with a smile, which told of pleasure, hovering on the brink of sorrowful reminiscences.

Il write to Miss Murray immediately," is Bentham, "Is Lady Trefoil at liberty?" lady is in her boudoir, madam."

ll then go to her ladyship myself;" and to fulfil her design, when Lord Stracy

1st Miss Bentham has not received any 5 intelligence?"

thank you, my lord," answered she, turnbeaming face towards him, "my brother ted to day at Captain Beresford's."

we me to congratulate you," he rejoined, pened the door, "and believe me," he in a lower tone, "few can offer more y."

words were scarcely heeded; already she rying to the Countess, and Stracy turned his former destination with softened—feelings bordering on love.

ace!" he exclaimed, on entering the here his friend sat alone, "if you will end to listen to such a renegade as I am, mmit something important to your safe."

le of arch meaning played over his feaid, almost involuntarily, Horace allowed ious gravity to be partly dissipated, as rered, "I am always happy, Egerton, to "In heaven's name, do not be so pompous, or you will quite derange my confession; but I must first ask you a question—why did you deny me admission last night?"

"Because I had had enough of your company for one while," said the other, with some asperity.

"You were wrong, Horace, you were wrong—I dare say love kept you awake all night, in consequence, for he is the very god of evil, you know."

"Come, come, Stracy, leave Cupid alone, and come to the point."

"Ah! to be sure," returned the young lord, assuming a look of chagrin. "I may as well break the ice at once: Jessy Murray"—Horace coloured at the name, for his companion watched him intently.

"Jessy Murray is a very charming girl—you think so, Ilorace?"

"Very," laconically rejoined Tulk.

"And you think she will make a good wife?"

"Undoubtedly."

"Now, I would wager an hour's flirtation, to a month of sober love making, that you think she would grace a parsonage better than adorn a court," answered Egerton, smiling.

"My opinion is of very little consequence, I should think," replied Horace, coldly.

"Wrong again, my good fellow."

"That is nothing new, Stracy,"

"It is quite new to find you so tetchy, my boy,

elieve I have pressed you rather hard. I rith the intention, Horace, of saying ——" s voice and manner became peculiarly nate, "that Jessy Murray is no particular te of mine. You all say I am too unstable in love, and perhaps it is true."

ank you for your consideration, my dear," returned Horace, with a glowing coune; "but I will not step into the arena you usly vacate in my favour. I should beguardon for venturing into your cruising "."

is no use bandying polite specches, Tulk; I you, plainly, I never had, or shall have, tention of making up to Jessy; though I r well enough. She is very pleasing, and be very happy to hail you, if you deem it ect for congratulation, as Benedict the I man. I was a sad mischievous dog last but I know you will grant me absolution," ng, he extended his hand to his friend, as ose, which was cordially accepted; and tracy added, "you would have been spared nours of uneasiness had you been less I wanted to tell you this before I went

nght to have known your character better,

love is centered in another, before you believe me? Jessy is nothing to me, I tell you. There is the Earl calling me, I must be off. Commend me to the gentle Jessy; of course you go to Brookside directly."

"Oh! certainly," said Horace, following him from the room; "I must immediately take advantage of the eclaircissement you have afforded me, for fear any one else steps between me and my Dulcinea." The next moment they had joined Lord Trefoil. Miss Bentham having communicated the anticipated arrival of her brother, at Brookside, to the Countess, immediately received that lady's permission to pass the evening there, agreeably to Miss Murray's suggestion; and, accordingly, she prepared, about three o'clock, to set off, for the joyful purpose of meeting the only relation who had ever evinced any interest in her welfare.

On passing through the hall, she was met by Lord Stracy; who no sooner learnt the object of her walk, than he insisted upon accompanying her, and, notwithstanding her gentle remonstrances, they left the house together.

That half hour's conversation fixed the before ill-defined sensations of the young nobleman—his general interest in the female sex became concentrated in one fair form, and, casting aside his flirting propensities, he suffered himself to revel in the light of true and ardent love! Each time he had seen Margaret he had been more

impressed with her attractions; partly, s, because they were concealed beneath ak of timidity, for we all know that the violet is in higher repute, from its seeking its beauty beneath its clustering verdure. Margaret-did she derive equal pleasure his companionship? Certainly not, for freen, with maternal solicitude, and the intentions, had bade her beware of ber her affections upon any one; describing a compound of selfishness and villany—a e against whom the young and unpronad need to exert all their small stock of ce and caution. Thus a feeling of dispervaded Margaret's mind, though she not be insensible to the charms of n's conversation. Diffidence was her connemy; more particularly in his society, he felt she was an object of regard. v treated her with such extreme kindness tenderness, if we may be allowed to use term, with reference to his polished mannat she could not help being gratified in to him. There was not any thing in he said to raise her suspicions of his , for he rather encouraged her to be the , then took the conversation into his own Her thoughts, too, were at that moment rely engrossed by the return of Lorrimer e was, if possible, more delightful to for her usual reserve was drawn aside.

like a curtain from before a Claude Lor the glowing loveliness of the landsca mind appeared through the aperture.

Egerton sighed, as they reached their tion, for he would willingly have prolon sincere pleasure he was enjoying.

Lientenant Bentham was still an e. guest, and, after having stayed some tin Captain Beresford, he tore Horace, who found with the young ladies, away from attractive spot, and, alike occupied with absorbing subject of a young attachment young men sauntered silently home together. events of the following week may be soon to

as not any thing of moment occupied it. Our hero's love continued to augment; he came acquainted with Lorrimer, whom he like

and, with Margaret and him, he passed all the time he could spare, until a letter from his frien Gurney, proposing a month's sojourn in Pans previous to that gentleman's intended visit at

Highfield, induced him to set off for that capital. Lord Power passed a week of felicity, as an accepted lover. Lady Clara, it is hoped, the same, as a promised bride; for the Earl gave a gracions consent to the proposal for her hand, while Horace quietly pursued his avocations, or sought the society of Jessy Murray, as duty, or opportunity, pointed out.

In the course of that short period, also, it was determined, by Lorrimer, that his unprotected

hould resign her situation in the Earl of s family, and accept an asylum at Brookhere, for some weeks—nay, it might be, he expected to be domesticated. Indigfilled his mind, when he learnt from et the treatment she had received from and he resolved to watch over her, until ful guardian should reclaim his office.

however, he had no fears of his attemptr Robert had broken every link which him to this country, and, by his crimes, I his respectability in the land of his

more Lorrimer heard of his brother, the felt convinced he had abandoned England, as he knew enough of his proceedings or three years prior to their father's to feel sure it had been contemplated by decamp, as soon as he could obtain the y, which had been his end and aim so To support his unjust parent's injured as Lorrimer's first wish, and it was settled that she should leave Highfield as soon as the Countess could suit herself other instructress for her little girls.

lannah Prior, also, we would say a few The day of her marriage with the young arrived, without her having received any isit from Lord Stracy; who, true to his , and also captivated with Margaret, had e to distress the peasant girl farther; deep had been her grief as the day approached—her father had frequently pressed his beloved child to tell him the cause of her evident pain, but in vain. The hour for the ceremony came, and the party for the village bridal assembled—the pallid Hannah, desperately calm, entered the churchthe ceremony commenced—the clergyman demanded, 'Wilt thou take this man, &c. &c.'-Hannah looked up-it was only a momentary glance—her lips moved, and a sound issued. between a scream and a sob-vet, she fell not, though apparently senseless-her rigid limbs supported her. All was now confusion, she was borne into the vestry, and, after half an hour, was sufficiently recovered to re-appear at the altar, where the customary forms were gone through in haste, for she was still in a highly nervous state. The actual cause of her attack was vainly canvassed-she was resolutely silent, and, although evidently ill, would not suffer advice to be sent for.

Ralph and herself immediately adjourned to the farm the former had taken for his bride, and the day passed away in the usual festivities consequent upon such an event.

The following day, Lord Stracy departed for Paris, where he was to meet his friend; but, ere he stepped into the carriage, he entered the school-room, where his sisters were busily employed at their studies. After embracing them with fraternal affection, he held out his hand to

HIGHFIELD TOWER.

Margaret, saying, with looks which plainly his sentiments, "Tu ne m'oublieras pas, I garet?" A bright glow overspread her feati for this was the first time he had addressed with such familiarity; but he added quickly, "will remember me kindly to your brother."

"Certainly, my Lord," she replied, hurric "and I am sure he unites with me in wis you a pleasant journey."

"Say, a safe and speedy return, also," rejc Egerton, in a low tone of peculiar meaning," at least must wish it."

"I wish, my Lord," returned Margaret, some spirit, rising as she spoke, "you w permit the ladies Helen and Charlotte to pro with their duties."

"Your wishes are commands, Miss Benth answered Stracy, inclining, and entirely chan his tone to one of carelessness. "I am alr brought to order,—the most obedient of pupils,"—he kissed his hand to the children, loudly wished him good bye, and quitted the r leaving the young governess unable to acc for a feeling of uneasiness which at that mor oppressed her. That his Lordship was partiher she had already discovered, but his atten alarmed, even more than they pleased, her his rank was so far superior to her own, tha dependant of his reputed gallantry, she wa duced to look suspiciously upon his contest, young and inexperienced, she was un

to repress a growing partiality for Egerton though she as yet knew not the state of her ow heart.

His departure appeared to curtail every plet sure which fell to her lot in her present situation and when, in a few weeks, she resigned her trus and took up her abode at Captain Beresford's he insensibly grew grave and thoughtful; for she felt as if she had resigned another tie which bound her to happiness.

In vain she strove to overcome the hysteric choaking sensation which would attack her times, when alone, or endeavour to equal Jes and Susan in their flow of spirits, as they s over the cheerful fire with Lorrimer and the uncle, in the long winter evenings. Frequent would the kind brother ask her, 'if she we unhappy—or wished for anything, which was his power to give her,' for although he had n been with her enough to know the state of h mind, before his father's death, yet she had becommore silent and reserved since she had change her domicile. But it was in vain to interrogather—she was ignorant of her own malady.

CHAPTER XVII.

Tis sweet to hear the watchdog's honest bark Bay deep-mouth'd welcome as we draw near home; Tis sweet to know there is an eye will mark Our coming, and look brighter when we come.

BYRON.

ING this season of severity, the communions with Highfield were far more uncertain
they had been while Lord Stracy had been
ome—it is true, Horace and Algernon visited
okside, now and then, but the former could
find equal facility in seeing Jessy in private
, as when the fields and gardens were in full
ure—neither did the merry Algernon meet
so attractive a companion in Lorrimer, as
ne more youthful Harry.

idy Clara's time was much taken up with l Power and her anticipated marriage, which fixed to take place early in the spring; efore Margaret seldom heard of Stracy—Besche never asked after him but in a general

way, for an undefineable feeling of timidity forbade her to mention him. Once, and only once, did Algernon shew her a letter, in which his brother had said, "Dités a la belle Margaret, quielle ne m'oublie pas," and those unmarked words, coming through a third person, crimsoned her cheeks, for she was conscious they referred to her last interview with him.

Weeks and months had now elapsed, and Stracy was still absent—December and its short dark weather, January, with its frosts, and February—rainy February, had successively rolled by, and yet Stracy was absent. The family prepared to go to town previous to the contemplated marriage, when every project was suddenly frustrated by the alarming illness of the Earl, whose health had been some time on the decline. A sensible change immediately took place. Lord Stracy was hastily recalled—the journey abandoned for that season—as it was declared by the faculty that Lord Trefoil's indisposition would be one of time, and Lady Clara's nuptials postponed indefinitely.

Egerton reached Highfield as quickly as a carriage and four and steam could transport him; but ten days, which had been consumed since the summons had been dispatched, had wrought a great improvement in his father, for the danger which had manifested itself at first had entirely disappeared: the consequent distress of the family had subsided, and Lord Stracy was greeted

rrival, with the radiant smile of hope. ta long time we have been expecting acy," said Lady Clara; as soon as her ad ascertained the state of the Earl, and he kind friend who summoned him—you did not comply with my request would not hesitate a moment in setting

ed, fair sister, you wrong me," answered sed, "I lost no time, but absolutely came ut letting Gurney know my flight;—unely I was not in Paris when your letter my apartments—consequently, there was ary delay: but you say my father is ter now?"

all danger is over, I trust," replied the b, who just then entered the room, and, tinued, as her step-son impressed a kiss r cheek, "but though our fears are at we are delighted to have you back again; Earl dispatched me, as soon as he heard rriage wheels, to desire to see you."

nformation was no sooner given than with, and the Earl received our hero augmentation of affection which illness ce appears often to confer for a time.

e, Horace," said Stracy, next morning,

vo young men, with Algernon, quitted kfast-room and took their hats, "let us Captain's, I want to see my old favourite

Jessy. By the bye, how does your suit prosper, my boy?"

"I fear it is not much farther advanced than when you went away, Egerton," returned Tulk, somewhat seriously, "in fact, I believe I have almost made up my mind to give it up."

"Pshaw! what are you jealous of Bentham? In the name of Cupid, tell me what is the matter."

"Why! in the first place," returned Tulk, "in the first place, the season is against me, I never have an opportunity of having her to myself."

"And Mr. Tulk is too modest to make love in public, eh!" said his Lordship, laughing—"never mind, my good fellow, we have had a sharp winter you must recollect,—your love will bloom afresh with the spring flowers."

Horace shook his head, as he answered, "Beresford becomes less cordial every day."

"Fancy, Horace, that must be fancy, I am sure; you were in Jessy's favour when I left, and I do not think she is a girl to change."

"You will judge for yourself, Stracy, I have not been there the last week."

"More fool you, begging your pardon, Horace, why not set the thing at rest at once?"

"You forget I am not so bold as-"

"Lord Stracy, perhaps," interrupted Egerton, "but indeed, I am the most modest fellow possible, where matrimony is concerned—your inference is a perfect libel, Horace."

"We will not have anything to say upon that

一方の一個人は大きの一方の一個人の一個人の一個人の一個人の一個人の一個人の一人の一個人

y no means, Stracy," returned Tulk, gravely, 1 only surprised—grieved—but not curious ought—"

ou."

I to smother the germs of irritation, he said, 'hy Horace, you look as inquisitive as a n her teens. Pray can I alleviate your sity—it is so painful a feeling that I really

h! spare me your thoughts, in the name of at is merciful," returned he, "until I am in the humour of listening to a sermon. ng of sermons, reminds me of your ordinawhen is that to take place?"

ot at present, I believe," answered the other, the Earl wishes me to go abroad for three is, with Algernon, before I get a curacy."

. pretty couple you will be, to travel on the

Continent together; why you will want me take care of you."

In this way, the young men continued to a verse, until they arrived at Brookside, when the entered the usual sitting-room without be announced. Lorrimer Bentham and Susan M ray were both occupied at a small table, near window: Jessy's pen glided rapidly along ash of paper, as she sat before her desk; while G tain Beresford sat beside the fire-spectacles nose, carefully perusing the debates. Stracy's eve wandered anxiously round the roo as he entered, but it only met the friendly su of those we have named. The form he sou was wanting, and he sat down, after the first. lutations, with a feeling of disappointment could scarcely have accounted for, had he be asked the cause. A few minutes, however, ser to put a period to his vexation, as his fries were all delighted to see him, and a merry stri of interrogation and rejoinder succeeded the trance of the visiters. At length our hero turn to Lorrimer, and inquired kindly after Margar when at that moment the door opened, and t Lieutenant replied, as his sister appeared.

"That question she can answer for herself, lord. Margaret," he added, "his lordship was the act of asking after you."

"I feel highly flattered by your recollection my lord," said she, giving her hand with more confidence than she had ever done before; for a

It that she was under the protection of a rother, who stood in the place of parent, an, and friend.

as his glance told he had returned uned; though of the truth, or deception, of celing she was as far as ever from deter-

During the rest of the period they led together, his manner was not to be derstood by those around them; indeed it een pretty evident to Lorrimer, before 's departure, that a sentiment approaching ender passion had been excited in their neighbour for his orphan sister, and with ide of love and partiality he was gratified ng her admired.

ing the time, however, that Stracy was in e, Lorrimer gathered from different sources icion of Egerton's real character, which was ned by his long absence; and he hoped his f his lordship's attention to Margaret might hout foundation, for to see her made a dupe Ild have called for that interference, on the mant's part, which he would have been to take upon himself. Margaret's conduct m into the belief that she had no particinin Stracy's feelings, for she never expressed ghtest desire to know why he prolonged his the French capital, or when he would

now, again, Lorrimer's fraternal fears were

on the qui vive, and it was with much satisfaction that he observed Stracy's apparent sincenty and delight in meeting Margaret. Her vivid blushes and tremulous hand were also marked, and appreciated; but Lorrimer determined to narrowly watch the parties and crush the attachment, ere yet it had time to take a firm root, if he should detect anything which might lead him to fear Margaret's young heart was in danger of being trifled with.

A kind and pressing invitation to luncheon induced the trio to prolong their visit, and when, towards three o'clock, they took leave, Lorrimer proposed accompanying them part of the way; for he was anxious to study the character of the young nobleman, who had so evident a design to make himself agreeable to a simple, unaffected girl of eighteen. The result of that day's observations proved anything but unfavourable, and the young men separated, in half an hour, with a promise of meeting early next day, for the purpose of riding together.

"Well! Stracy," said Horace, on resuming their way, "do you not think my chance of success very doubtful? Is not the Captain peculiarly distant to me?"

"No! upon my word, my dear fellow, I thought every thing was in excellent training. Jessy was quite as encouraging as I like a girl to be, and as to the uncle—you must manage him a little, though he may look grim now and then. I would you what you like it is is only because you so long before you declare your intentions. w take my advice, pop the question, and all l be right. It must come to touch and go at t."

'But do you think I am justified in asking his action, Egerton?"

'To be sure you are, I fancy I understand a le about 'soft looks;' at least, I think I can tty well tell when I can twist a girl round my n little finger, and therefore will venture to orm you that, were I you, noble Horace, I buld take the earliest opportunity of breathing love, which consumes you, into her willing 'I would indeed."

Stracy's voice gradually lost the serious tone, which he began this conversation, and assumed t of banter.

'Well! I believe you are more au fait than I," returned Horace, "and will think over your gestions, but cannot say I feel so confident as I would have me. I am sometimes inclined to eve Captain Beresford intends his son to rry Jessy."

Hah!" exclaimed Lord Stracy, suddenly relecting Harry's former solicitude concerning cousin when with Horace, "do you really leve that?"

'ulk replied in the affirmative, and Stracy said, Jpon my word, that is a bad business—a very one. for I suspected something of that sort

when Hal was here, though it had escaped my memory until this moment. But you are safe with Jessy I am almost sure," he continued, after a pause, "therefore your case is not desperate-try your luck, at all events—women always have their own way, you know. Come, do not looks blue, man, before you know your fate—but, so here comes Lady Clara and her gallant knight; we must postpone the consideration of our stor and battery; only remember, I am ready to support you to the best of my ability;" and with gay laugh at his own offer of assistance, Lot Stracy advanced to meet his sister

CHAPTER XVIII.

It's good to be off with the old love, Before ye be on with the new.

OLD BALLAD.

3 about ten days after the period referred the last chapter, that several of the family were assembled in the Earl's private sitting for he was so far recovered as to be able to e his friends, although he had not yet been stairs. Horace was reading to his lordship, the Countess found amusement, as well as yment, in completing the last of a set of ittle caps, for the expected infant of a poor 1 in the village. Lord Stracy, too, had come pay his father a visit, and stood by the fire. nis right arm resting on the mantle, and g in his hand a netted purse of deep crimlk, which he had that morning begged from rret, under the plea of its extreme utility ; but in truth, because he wished to have ing of her he loved constantly about him.

After looking at it a minute, he slowly drew two or three shillings from his waistcoat pocket, and sleeped them, one by one, through the narrow opening; the slide being drawn down, half a descen gold coins were placed at the opposite extremity, when a servant entered and handed him a waiter, upon which lay a single letter, at the same time saving laconically, "The post, my Lord." Our hero took the missive, and pashing the purse into the abyss of his trowser packet, broke the seal, and cast his eyes rapidly over the lines. Horace proceeded in his avocation as soon as Dalston was gone, without bestowing a look upon Stracy; but the Rarl, who had no particular duty marked out for his eyes, by chance fixed them on his son, whose expressive conntenance varied from pale to red, more than once, during the few moments occupied in the perusal of the letter.

"What is the matter, my dear Stracy?" asked the Earl, kindly.

"Oh! nothing material, my Lord," returned he, quietly folding the letter up; "only an unfortunate speculation of mine abroad, and which I commissioned a friend to arrange, as best himight, when I was called home so suddenly. His father made no further remark, and Egertocendeavoured to assume his usual air of non chalance; but he could not accomplish it, and at the end of two or three minutes, he quitte the room. He started, as he passed a large

HIGHFIELD TOWER.

glass in a kind of passage room, on his w down stairs; for his cheek was still blanch and he stopped an instant with—we may alm say a slight smile, at his own appearance.

"I am certainly a great fool," thought I to excite suspicion in this way; but con we will see again what Gurney says." Stra opened the door of his own room, as he co muned with himself thus, when, throwing hi self into an easy chair by the bed-side, he pull out the epistle. At the risk of being chargeal with curiosity, we must venture to cast a furtiglance over Egerton's shoulder, and gain insight into the cause of his sudden emotion.

Mivart's, March -

I have this moment arrived here, my dear Stracy, (1 the words of the letter,) and find, by an express from ho this morning, that my poor mother is no longer an inl bitant of this world. I must, therefore, immediately into Devonshire, instead of visiting Lord Augustus Conw at present. Nina has accompanied me, according to a agreement, as I found it impossible to get rid of her, une any pretext of eternal love, speedy return, &c. &c. I w. her to stay in lodgings here, until my return to town, wh I could escort her to your neighbourhood; but she is, this moment, pleading so earnestly to be sent forthwith her dear, dear Stracy, that I have at last consented, a she sets out for the Blue Boar, at K-, which I belie is about four or five miles from you, early to-morr morning. She does not wish, however, to remain at 1 inn longer than necessary, and requests you will procu lodgings, for herself and servant, as soon as possible. know, my dear fellow, this is not exactly consonant wi your wishes. but as things stand at present, I have no other resource; for really I think it would not be right to leave so is vely a creature as Nina all alone. Women will be wonen to the end of the chapter. She will therefore be at K—by five o'clock on Friday; and be assured, I will come to your assistance as soon as my old governor will let me stip my collar. With Nina's best love,

Believe me in haste,

Truly yours,

WILLIAM GURSEY.

"Deuce take it," exclaimed Stracy, throwing the document down in no very good humour. "I wish Gurney had sent that girl home again, or cut his own throat, on the other side of the water, before he had done such a foolish thing as this. What, in the name of wonder, can I do with Nina?" He leaned his head against the bed, and, for some moments, ruminated deeply.

"Well!" said he at length, "I suppose I am finely caught, and must make the best of it; but where I am to find lodgings I know not; and this is Thursday too. To-morrow night I am to be at K—— to meet Nina." He paused a moment; then added, in a softer tone, while a smile flitted over his before angry countenance, my pretty little run away; I wonder how she will like the gloomy English! Poor little thing. I must be kind to her in a strange country, a all events; but it is a desperate plague she has arrived just now." With these words he rose and paced the room in silence, for upwards of a quarter of an hour. Then starting, as if

thought had struck him, he hastened for his hat, and left the house.

t afternoon he was engaged to ride with ret and Lorrimer, therefore no opportunity ted itself of making any advances in ring an asylum for the young stranger; I, he was so perfectly happy in the society he really loved that he entirely forgot his 's letter, which had been of sufficient image, at the time of its receipt, to plunge to transient alarm and ill humour.

had every reason now to hope and bethat he had made an impression on Mars young heart. Lorrimer also behaved to with that cordiality which told him the ion lavished on his sister was any thing appleasant to him; and Egerton began, for rst time, to taste the delights of a genuinc ion.

, how soon was the exquisite pleasure of terview with Margaret corroded, when his hts reverted to Gurney's unfortunate, ortune, and annoying communication; a of anger passed over his serious face, within the first five minutes after bidding farewell for that day at six o'clock. ings," thought he; "what am I to do for ngs? Oh! hang it, Nina must find them exself. One night at the Blue Boar cannot her;" and, with this reflection, he entered ome, and ran up to his room to dress.

All that evening he seemed out of spirits, and he observed that more than one friend had noticed the strange circumstance of his gloon; still he could not shake it off, and consequently retired early, under the plea of having a head ache, that universally feigned indisposition, the cloak of so many falsehoods!

Sleep, however, failed not speedily to close his Lordship's eyes; and he rose in the morning in spirits, to combat any of the troubles of the coming hours.

Breakfast over, he sallied alone into the stable, for the purpose of having his horse saddled, that he might ride over to K——; but, within the few minutes requisite for that operation, Algernon followed him to say that Lorrimer had called to make inquiries after the Earl.

- "You will come and see him, Egerton, will you not?" said the boy.
- "I really do not know whether I can," returned he, in a tone of irritation; "I have an engagement to fulfil."
 - "Susan Murray is with him," said Algernon.
- "Well, Clara can entertain her, and you must do the civil to the Lieutenant, boy. I am sure I have set you a good example long enough, for you to acquit yourself to admiration."
- "But Miss Bentham is here," replied his brother archly; "and I am sure you cannot think of riding without her."
 - "You are an impudent fellow, Gerney," said

Stracy, smiling, and putting his hand on the other's shoulder; "but I suppose I must put off my ride for an hour, since Margaret is here. You may keep the mare saddled," he pursued to his groom, "for I shall be down again soon."

This promise, however, was, like many others, made only to be frustrated; for Lady Clara would not allow Margaret to leave her for some time; and Egerton, of course, was chained to his sister's side, while she had so charming a companion.

The music room being in a distant part of the house from where the invalid Earl sat, the young people had nothing to prevent their amusing themselves with a little practice, and Lord Stracy, although in a fidget to be off to K---, could not make up his mind to quit Margaret's guitar, so long as she would consent to officiate at it. Twelve and one o'clock passed, and still the horse waited his pleasure; but at two, when the luncheon was brought in, Margaret protested against staying longer, for she felt sure Jessy and Captain Beresford expected them back for that refreshment, and, in defiance of entreaty, they departed. One reason perhaps of their determination was caused by an enquiry on the part of the groom, "Whether the mare might be put up?" to which Lord Stracy had replied in the negative, for Lorrimer immediately begget that his visit might not interfere with Egerton's pursuits.

It was, however, verging on half past two, before our hero found himself en route for the Blue Boar. The small market town of K—was a long five miles from Highfield, by the road, but Stracy determined to shorten his journey one third, by crossing some farms belonging to his father. In his way, he had to unfasten several gates, and push his horse across a stream, which detained him quite as long as if he had gone the other way; but then his ride was more pleasant, along the grassy cart tracks, than if he had pursued the hard beaten road, and he pondered as he went, upon the best means for securing the desired accommodation.

More than once, during his former stay at Highfield, he had traversed this path, and threaded it correctly; but now, being in haste, and thinking to cut off an angle, he took another road, which brought him in front of the house tenanted by Ralph Plowden and his wife. Stracy had not seen Hannah since his return, for he had been too deeply engaged with Margaret to heed other attractions; besides, her home being now three miles off, instead of half a one, made a vast difference, and he had not even thought of visiting her. But now it occurred to him that she might possibly be of some service to him in his need, so be paused, and, then throwing himself off his horse, he fastened her to the white rails which enclosed the grass plat round the farm house, and boldly knocked at the door.

It was Mrs. Plowden herself who opened it: "My Lord," she exclaimed, with a violent start, when she perceived who was her visiter.

"Yes, it really is I, Hannah," interrupted his Lordship, "your everlasting torment has found you out again—but not with the intention of teasing you any more, my little bride," he continued, on seeing her look of distress. "I want your assistance, come, take me into your parlour, and let me explain myself."

"Certainly, my Lord," returned Mrs. Plowden, leading the way to a small neat room, behind the litchen, when, having closed the door, she sunk on a seat, entirely overcome at seeing him.

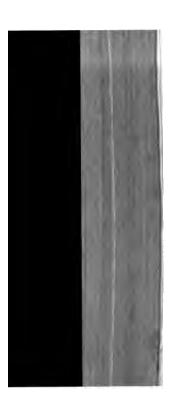
Lord Stracy, quite annoyed at the sensation he had created, took her hand, and, with the utmost kindness, endeavoured to calm her. His touch alone appeared to re-animate her, for, with an effort, she said, "Pardon this weakness, my Lord, but your sudden appearance took me by surprise."

"Yet, you ought to have expected me here before, Hannah."

"I own I did, my Lord; but I hoped you would be more considerate for yourself and me: but you look well, my Lord," she continued, willing to change the subject.

"Oh! I am sure to be well at Highfield," he said, as he walked to the window. "What a pretty place you have here, Hannah!"

Mrs. Plowden assented, and he pursued, "does your farm thrive?"



suddenly towards her, Hannah, can you tell: apartments in this neigmy acquaintance. A frime to obtain a lodgin without your assistance do his bidding. Do yo in K——?"

"Really, my Lord, town," returned Mrs. P incompetent to answer most likely you might Mrs. Shag, who keeps t two or three rooms to they are not fit for a lac. "Ah! but I should

house, Hannah, quite you not a room or two would be just the thing "Why, Ralph did letting part of the hous

"Perhaps he may demay command a tenant.

if Ralph should have altered his mind. So come, my Lord." She then led the way from the room, and, as Stracy followed her, he said,

"I had rather fix my friend with you than my one else, for I am sure you will be attentive med kind to her, Hannah."

"I am sure, my Lord," returned Mrs. Plowen, "both Ralph and myself should try and stisfy the wants and wishes of any friend of ours; but this, my Lord, is the sitting-room;" saying, she introduced him to a comfortable zed apartment, from which two doors opened to other chambers.

"Excellent!" said he, as he looked around, this will do, admirably—looks into the garden o—that is capital. Oh! you must certainly rsuade your husband to let me consider the miness settled."

"I will do all I can, my Lord, but I cannot I you our terms, until I have seen Ralph."

"The terms! oh, never mind them, I am sure be satisfied with any thing you ask. I will I this lady to come to-morrow, to engage your lgings for herself."

"Very well, my Lord, I shall be happy to commodate her, with Ralph's approbation," swered the other, as she opened the house door permit his egress.

"You are just as kind as you used to be, little unnah," said Stracy, gaily attempting to ute her.

With a face crimsoned with confusion and anger, she stepped back, saying, "My Lord, you forget yourself—Hannah Prior put off her thoughtless conduct, I hope, with her maiden name."

"You are right, Mrs. Plowden, and I beg your pardon," answered her companion, hastily, "do you grant it?" and he bowed slightly as he spoke. Hannah merely curtsied, as he passed out, and, re-mounting his horse, Stracy soon relieved her of his presence.

Having thus easily effected his purpose of procuring a retreat for the young female, known hitherto by the name of Nina, our hero leisurely proceeded on his way to K——, which he reached within a few minutes of the time appointed.

The arrival of a public conveyance in a country place ever creates a bustle and confusion, which lasts until the passengers have disposed of themselves and their luggage, when the ordinary quiet street resumes its wonted tranquillity. The idle, and the expectant, watch for its approach with anxiety, as employment, or a termination to their doubts, hopes, or fears, and among these last was our friend Stracy, who ornamented the pavement before the Blue Boar, some minutes, before the Telegraph came up. The horn sounded at the entrance of the town, and every eye gazed down the road—the vehicle advanced at a rattling pace, and, in a few seconds, concluded its journey.

ey-headed old farmer was the first to alight, our hero unceremoniously jostled, in order st Nina, who was the next to descend.

! my Lord Stracy," exclaimed she—"how I am to see you again, I am so tired of shut up in your diligence, and your English are si tristo—ah! dio mio, si tristo."

ear, indeed, you have not found your jourry pleasant," returned Egerton, smiling, as r an ancient dame follow his young and riend from the carriage, "your companions ot been of a class to amuse or interest you." Lordship then gave sundry directions reto the luggage, and led Nina into the Inn, he had already secured accommodation for the present.

ien you have not done as I wished, my 'said Nina, on entering the best room the afforded. "Yet, William told me he had med my request to you."

rould not, Nina," returned Stracy, placing f beside her, on the old horse-hair sofa, ime was short, and some caution, you know, ecessary."

n! so William told me, and I am sure I am ist who would get you into trouble, mon umi," and the lovely foreigner looked at ith an expression of warmth, with which. Northern clime, we are wholly unaced.

think I have succeeded, however, in finding

you apartments for to-morrow," said Stacy, "and will be here early in the morning to conduct you to them."

- "D'accord mon Stracy—but is this a part of the world where people live without eating?" she said, gaily, "for I have not tasted a morsel since nine o'clock."
- "Certainly not." returned he, laughing, "we English enjoy the privilege of being considered good livers. Shall I ring the bell, and order you some dinner?"
 - "Yes. yes, and you will take yours with me."
- "Not to-night, Nina, for I am expected home-to-morrow, perhaps."
- "No, to night it must be, or I will discard you from my table for ever," she said, decidedly.

The waiter here made his appearance, and while she gives him her orders, and Stracy is carclessly tapping his boot with his silver-headed whip, we will give a hasty sketch of her appearance.

Tall, and slender, with an exquisitely rounded figure, she betrayed grace in every movement, while a dark Italian eye, and bewitching smile, gave charms to a face devoid of decided beauty. But, it was when she spoke that you became fully aware of her powers to delight; for her voice was absolute music, and few there were who could withstand it, coupled with her other attractions. Her age might be from six to eight and twenty—that age when the loveliness of the

t given place to the expanded charms an, and every beauty is taken advancaptivate and enthrall. Can we wonwith the power and will to please, succeeded, and that Lord Stracy, after uggle, which his fair friend knew well erpret into a challenge for conquest favour,—can we wonder that our herod, in the course of an hour, sat down th his gay enchantress.

selves, we may safely answer in the and we trust our readers will not feel nough they may sorrow. The hours y by, and it was past eleven, ere Egereded in escaping from the winning on of the stranger.

amed of his recent employment,—his
-he hastily urged his horse towards
passed the lodge just as the churchstriking twelve. Silence reigned
the mansion, and he crept up to his
with the utmost quietude, for fear of
is invalid parent, whose door he was
pass.

CHAPTER XIX.

A pretty woman is a welcome guest, And Laura's brow a frown had rarely bent, Indeed she shone all smiles, and seem'd to flatter Mankind with her black eyes for looking at her.

Byron.

STRACY's morning greetings were intermingled with enquiries respecting his evening's avocations, which he satisfied by a true statement this meeting a friend he had not seen for some time, and of his being persuaded to partake their dinner.

"Well!" said Lady Clara, "you might hav stayed at home the last day before I go away, would have been kind."

"Oh! you are going to London to day, are you Clara? I did not think of that—is Lady Powe to call for you on her way?"

"Francis and I join her at K—, this morning," returned his sister,—" perhaps you will g with us—Lady Trefoil has ordered the carriag at twelve."

"Oh! yes, I will accompany you with pleasure, ough, I dare say, Power will not thank me for aking a third."

The lover laughed, as he said, "Although I ppose you consider a trio one of the miseries human life, Stracy, neither Clara nor myself ist do so; for my mother's sake."

"She will try it, Power; at present she had you all to herself here. 1," he added, to his sister, "that Horace I tell you how very awkwardly the little I feels in the society of more than two peris; am I not right, Tulk?" (and his Lordp laughed heartily at his friend, who, as well Lady Clara, looked discomposed,) "still I will ready to attend you, fair sister," he said, then you go to F--: perhaps you may see in town, before the end of the season, if rney pay a short visit here. You will stay e in the gay world, I suppose, as you do not ined to make Power a happy husband until the tumn: what the deuce do you wait so long for?" Oh! many reasons, too long for specification. acy," said Lady Clara, as she left the room to ke the final arrangements for her departure. His Lordship readily took advantage of this portunity of being transported to the scene of s appointment, for he had resolved to take every ailable measure for concealing the obnoxious rival of the Italian. Accordingly, as soon as ady Clara was deposited in the carriage of the VOL III.

Baroness, Egerton dismissed his father's servants, saying, he should prefer returning home on foot; and then turned, as soon as the barouche left the high street, and entered the inn he had quitted so late the night before. He found Nina impatiently waiting his arrival, for her first words were those of reproach for his tardiness. Having, however, in a few minutes explained the cause of his delay, and ascertained that she had been satisfied with her quarters, our hero offered her his arm, and they set off for the North Farm, which was the name of the place where the Plowdens had taken up their abode.

"I hope, my Lord," said Nina, as her companion led her through a little gate by the road side, into a newly ploughed field, where the ground was none of the smoothest, although there certainly was a path, "I hope you do not contemplate our walking far; for I assure you I am not yet able to accommodate myself to your way of performing perfect journeys on foot."

"Oh! no, do not be alarmed," replied he, smiling; "you shall not be fatigued unnecessarily; but you will not find an English country life so luxurious as that you have been leading in Paris. I hope William explained all that, before you quitted France, together with the imperative necessity of your remaining perdue at present."

"Oh! yes, he told me a great deal more than

! can remember, but you will see me often in my prison, carrissimo?"

"Undoubtedly, I will visit you as frequently as is consistent with your concealment. Remember, the farm you are going to belongs to Lord Augustus Conway, not my father. I could not risk suspicion, you know."

"Oh! no, you must not involve yourself in any trouble for me," returned Nina, while her flashing eyes beamed with kindness. "I will be guided entirely by you; but when shall we come to our destination? I am so fatigued—Ah! Je n'en puis plus;" and with many a pretty graceful air, she reproached her conductor for imposing so severe a task upon her.

Yet they still advanced; for the gay Stracy beguiled the road with his lively banter and amiable persuasions; which, together with the sterling support of his arm, enabled Nina to reach the North farm, where Mrs. Plowden received both with true country hospitality.

"Ralph has decided upon letting the rooms you saw yesterday, my Lord," said she, as her guests entered the little parlour.

"Ah! that is all right, for then, Nina, you will not have to return to K——. Of course you are quite ready for Madame Carrotti, Hannah?"

"Why, my Lord, I should have liked a day's notice. The rooms ought to be cleaned, my Lord."

"Oh! but this lady cannot possibly go back to K--."

"No. indeed, my good woman: I am much too tired: I must stay here now."

"And I will order your servant and your lumrage to be forwarded forthwith," said his lordship; "but let me see you safely installed before I leave you." So saying, he led her into the apartment destined for her use; and, after promising to see her again very soon, and silencing Mrs. Ploudien's scruples, he took his leave, with many injunctions from Madame Carrotti, to expedite the removal of her property.

The afternoon was far advanced when Lord Stracy re-entered the precincts of Highfield Tower: and, when he did so, it was with an unusually pensive air, which denoted the little satisfaction he could derive from the employment in which he had been engaged.

Our hero, as we have hitherto pourtrayed him, the reader must know was not given to the melting mood," but was prone to treat every thing as lightly as possible. A frown ill became his countenance; and grievous, indeed must have been its cause to have prolonged it beyond the hour. With the origin of this day's disquietude, however, we have at present nothing to do, although its effects were strongly developed as Egerton stepped onwards. Gradually as he neared home, and the distance increased between him and the occasion of his gloom, his

brightened, and when he came in sight of ce, who with slouched hat, and folded arms, lowly walking some paces in advance, he ared to divest himself of every care, and saluting his friend with a slap on the der, he said "Ar't' deaf, as well as blind, rotary of Cupid?"

wish I were," answered Tulk, coldly, as rned towards Stracy, after a start at his emonious intimation of his approach, "I I were, Stracy."

'hy, what is the matter now?' returned the ; "I did not know you could profane your y such a speech."

is very wrong of me," answered Horace, htfully.

o be sure it is. You, a teacher of youth n embryo Bishop, too!" said his Lordship, ironical tone: "but what the devil ails Iorace? Has Cloe been unkind?" and he ed a comical look of mock commiseration. Ier uncle has," rejoined Tulk gloomily; do not laugh at me, Stracy," he added; ndeed I am not in a humour to bear it." augh, my dear fellow," exclaimed Egerton; sure you I have no such intention; but do you mean—has Beresford given you dismissal?"

companion nodded, and he continued:
, that is unlucky; but Jessy, what does

made a demand upon Jeand—she refused—no—I me, but she said her unce subject. I asked whether upon me, but I could a except tears; and I am subfore I got there."

"Oh! but tears are only a woman's weapon. You things, my loving friend that the Captain fortune attacked the Captain fortune."

"Oh! but tears are only a woman's weapon. You things, my loving frier attacked the Captain, for instantaneously, that I that a preconcerted plan. I again, and sighed bitterly "Why, I could not have deeply involved, Horace, thetically. "On what is refuse? a previous engage.

was after her."
" Still I thought that:

ge that patience and craft do the business er up, man, one refusal's no rebuff," and his ship smiled encouragingly. "What say you proxy; shall I make love to the old man ou?"

No! for heaven's sake, Egerton, do not le yourself. No, I am going abroad with mon soon, and I shall then forget that I made a fool of myself. I wish you had: given me your well-meant opportunity aying my court to Jessy; for it would saved me a world of regret and annoy-

low, that is not a charitable wish, Horace," ned Stracy gaily, "for it might only have at the load of disappointment from your shoulders to mine."

h! you would not have been so unfore; Captain Beresford would ——"

What, Horace?"

Oh! nothing, nothing. I believe I am crazy. I do not know how you manage, y, for you play with hearts for ever, and ever lose by it—how do you manage?"

Secause," returned the young nobleman, "I commit myself so far as to put rejection in I's power; once, indeed, I had to stand the of a furious Irishman, after a desperate tion with his pretty sister; but that was in lays when 'I was young,' before I had ed at years of discretion, you know; but

sounds, man, I might as well talk to the 'Stracy pillar' as spend my breath upon you."

During this speech, Horace had again relapsed into deep thought, and seemed perfectly absorbed in his own reflections; which elicited the last exclamation from our hero.

"Do pray excuse me, Egerton," returned Tulk, when thus roused by the exalted tone of his companion. "I am too much vexed to be your jest just now; indeed, I am much hurt."

"I have already told you I am perfectly sincere, Tulk," rejoined Stracy, entirely dropping his light manner; "I am really very sorry for you, but yet you will neither profit by my consolations, nor allow me to assist you; so what in the name of wonder do you expect me to do! If you will not give me employment, by your confidence, I must needs amuse myself, for I am sure always to work hard, for good or for evil."

"My dear Egerton," said Horace, warmly,
your reproaches are perhaps merited; but my mind is so deeply imbued with my vexation that I cannot explain myself more now; to-morrow, perhaps."

"To-morrow he it then," returned his Lordship; "but just tell me how Margaret is to-day; did she ask for me?"

"I did not see her," said Horace, quietly.

Stand oversman or although size

"Nor Lorrimer?"

" No."

Then you must excuse me leaving you, disconsolate friend, for I shall be off to kside; and tell the Countess, or my father, ey ask for me, that if I can get a dinner the Captain I shall not be home until the ing: now do you quite comprehend, or has 'le passion injured your Mercurial powers?' No, I am not quite insane at present, y; you may trust to me in so trifling an."

I thousand thanks," returned our hero, as verged into the pathway to Brookside.

Idenly pausing, however, he inquired for mon, and, after learning that he had been ged to go out with the Countess, when ce left home, Stracy requested him to tell rother to join him at the Captain's at nine k. Egerton soon reached the domicile of air girl who for the present occupied the try place in his affection—shall we say? we we may venture so to designate his legs; for this volatile, inconsiderate youth certainly never been so long influenced by on for any female, however young and y.

y welcome to the table of the gallant r, and, with Margaret by his side at dinner, he in turn sought her vicinage in the ng, he passed a few hours as pleasantly possible to conceive hours to be consumed.

Jessy Murray, he remarked, did not make her appearance, and, notwithstanding he was well acquainted with the cause of her absence, he ear quired after her with the warmth of friendship. Her uncle instantly replied that, having been nervous and indisposed all day, she had been persuaded to remain quiet in her room." His lordship smiled slightly, as he said, "Well, I hope she will be sufficiently recovered to ride with us in the morning, sir, and come to the Tower afterwards; Lady Trefoil is more at liberty now that my father is improving, and will be delighted to see her."

The gravity of the uncle, as he expressed his obligation at the Countess's notice of his nieces. and the hint he gave of the necessity for their attending more strictly to the superintendence of their school, now that Lady Clara was gone, told Egerton that it was no longer his intention to permit such constant intercourse between the two families as had been hitherto the case; indeed, it seemed to our gay friend as if, in the few words of excuse the uncle uttered, he confirmed poor Horace's sentence of hopelessness and banishment. He was not, however, one likely to despair, for, in his own case, opposition would only have acted as an incentive to greater exertions in order to gain his point-a strengthener to his resolution; and he determined by every means in his power to assist his friend, though for once he was prudent, and resolved not to do anything precipitately.

lgernon having, with some difficulty, obtained father's consent to fulfil Stracy's appointt, made one of the party, and, between ten eleven o'clock, the brothers returned home ther.

What a nice girl Margaret Bentham is," Algernon. "I used to like her when she was us, but now she has lost all that reserve h characterised her, and is much improved you not think so, Stracy?"

les, boy, she is a very nice girl, as you saly observe," returned the other, musingly. onder whether the Earl was pleased with

dare say he never took any notice of her, my mother is commander-in-chief of the l-room. By the bye, you know the present rnante, what do you think of her?"

think," answered Egerton, shaking off his rary thoughtful mood, "I think I shall not le myself to look at her twice; where your recould have picked her up, I cannot tell—she is old and ugly enough for a scare

I always think of a yellow frost-bitten when I see her."

Ia! ha! that is a capital simile, Stracy, but her for all that; she is not half so partiabout my passing my time with Helen and otte as your friend Miss Bentham."

h! what a pity Horace is not here to desupon self-interest," replied his lordship, "what a beautiful opportunity he has lost. Ou views are equally commendable, Algernon, i preferring either of these ladies: but of one, know much that is excellent, and of the other nothing at all."

"Each have their good qualities, I suppose Stracy, but one is a peu passée, and the other young, pretty, and worthy of being — Lady Stracy."

"Pooh! boy," said the brother, laughing "prithee leave me at liberty a little longer—have not shaken hands with master Cupid yet."

But our hero did not speak with that confidence which he would have done a few months or perhaps even three short weeks, before, for hi conscience told him that he had already indulge the idea of seeing Margaret his bride; but, a the conversation did not please him, he turned it and began to talk of Lady Clara. This topi was soon exhausted, and, on Algernon's inquiring what he had been doing the rest of the day, h simply replied, "Walking," and hastened on to the house; for, on that head, he knew he could not give a satisfactory account to himself, on others.

no. T . own name or De-

CHAPTER XX.

Graceful of form, by nature taught to please, Of power to melt the female breast with ease; To her Palemon told his tender tale, Soft as the voice of summer's evening gale.

FALCONER.

NTING his horse at an early hour, the follownorning, Stracy proceeded to Brookside, he found the brother and sister, with Susan ay, ready to set out; but Jessy still occupied oom, and Stracy was too much absorbed Margaret, in a very few minutes, to think any other affairs besides his own.

c country, through which the party rode, peautiful; at times their road lay through lost retired lanes, where the bright green of spring was just beginning to appear, and rimroses and violets looked gay beneath the es; and again, at others, they emerged upon nmon, or village green, where all was life nimation. For some time, the young people de abreast, for the road was sufficently wide,

but when, in about an hour, they followed a bride pathway, they were necessitated to divide into pairs. It was then that Stracy enjoyed himself—that he monopolised Margaret's conversation—for partly perhaps from inclination, and partly from design, the Lieutenant selected Susan Murray for his companion, and left his sister for the young nobleman. Then did Lord Stracy put forth those powers of attractive conversation which had already made more than one inexperienced heart flutter with hope; then did he pour forth those gentle nothings which speak the language of love, and, during which time, their friends had far outstripped them in distance.

With an animation Stracy had seldom seen in her, Margaret kept up the early part of the conversation; but when it became more particular, and his eyes almost told the tale he had not mustered the courage to hear his tongue pronounce, she grew silent and embarrassed, while she urged her horse into a canter. For a mile they proceeded at a brisk pace, but no brotherno friend, was in sight; they pulled up, and again Stracy's manner was marked-was tender. and Margaret was ill at ease. All Mrs. Green's warnings rose before her, for she could not be unaware of the end to which Lord Stracy's words and manners tended; and, after a few hurried sentences, expressive of surprise at Lorrimer's non-appearance, she would again have quickened her pace, but he laid his hand upon hers, and in

a thrilling tone of supplication, said, "Why in baste, Margaret? Am I unworthy to protect you?"

She started, and suddenly reining up her horse, scarcely knowing what she did, replied, "I cannot trust my own judgment, my lord."

- "Will you trust your brother's, my sweet friend?" rejoined Egerton, still retaining the hand he had taken possession of.
- "No, no, I cannot, my lord," she said, and her cheek, before crimson, now grew pale as marble, "Your rank—mine—so different—property, my lord."
- "So proud already, Margaret!" returned her lover, reproachfully. "I value not such considerations, and why should you? Fancy me in your own sphere—nay, an inferior one if you like—might I then hope?" His voice—his looks overcame the philosophy, the transient objections, of the gentle girl, and, unable to reply, she rode on; but still their hands were together, and still Stracy poured forth his love and devotion some short distance.

With averted face and trembling frame, Margaret permitted her horse to be guided by his own pleasure, until Stracy, in the space of ten minutes, again said, "You will not forbid me to hope, Margaret?" She turned, as she replied in a voice of forced composure, "Believe me, my lord, deeply grateful for your kindness—perfectly sensible of the honour you would confer upon me, but"——

"Say not you reject me, Margaret; I would rather be hated and despised than have the offer of my heart thrown back to me, together with cold thanks for a proposal which is worthless as soon as you refuse it. No! tell me at once your determination, and—I will bow to my fate—if necessary; but I have never loved before, Margaret, and I swear I will never love again!"

"Oh! my Lord," returned the agitated girl, "it is not generous thus to urge me—indeed, you terrify me. Oh! where can my brother be!" and she gazed round, in much distress.

"Dear Margaret," returned his Lordship, in the soft, soothing tone of entreaty, "be calm—be yourself. I will not distress you. I have not forfeited your good opinion, by my suit, have I?" Margaret shook her head, and he continued, with a slight smile, "you will not bid me despair, I see, so I still hope. Am I too presumptuous?"

She looked up in his face, for a moment, as she answered, "You have a father, my Lord, and I a guardian."

"True," rejoined he, "but they have hearts like our own; and, from what I know of Lorrimer, I am led to think he is not averse to the connection."

"Lorrimer is not my guardian, my Lord," said Margaret.

"Permit me then to enquire who holds that office!" urged the persevering Stracy.

"Another brother, who is now abroad," an-

swered his fair companion, blushing slightly, as the recollected the indifferent character she had teard of that guardian.

"Still, I may make Lorrimer acquainted with his day's occurrence, may I not, Margaret? may ain his approbation—his advice."

Again Miss Bentham hesitated, and slowly the orses moved on. Stracy again took the hand to had for some minutes relinquished, and idently pressed it to his lips.

Hastily, but not angrily, withdrawing it, she aid, in a tremulous voice, as she again raised er eyes to his, "If, my Lord, mutual friends are greeable, I cannot—will not, mar your happiess, and, perhaps my own, by any foolish cruples, but ——"

"But—what?" exclaimed the impatient nobletan, "tell me all the conditions—most willingly rill I subscribe to any—to all." But Margaret's tomentary resolution had vanished, and she was ilent once more.

Enough, however, had been extracted from er to assure Stracy that his suit would not seet with opposition from her, and he was in a erfect ecstacy of delight. He already fancied er his own, and, in the course of another hour, aring which neither thought of their other comanions, he had learnt the true position in which largaret was placed, with regard to family and ortune; for she had no wish for her lover to uncy that she had any advantages in that way

to offer. Thus the conversation, the latter parof their ride, was calm and confidential, totall devoid of any reference to Stracy's love, though is eyes spoke volumes; and, as they proceeded their confidence in each other increased, and time slipped away unheeded. Suddenly, their attention was aroused by the chimes of a village clock; they listened—one—two—three! "So late cried both at once, as Stracy consulted himself.

"It is, indeed," he said, "and we are certainl six miles from home. I am sure I did not knowhere I was, until that old monitor warned m of the hour."

"Lorrimer will be quite uneasy," rejoint Margaret, giving her horse the rein. "I do not know this country at all yet; and, absolutely, thought we were within a mile or two of Captai Beresford's."

Having arrived within a few yards of the house, Lord Stracy said, in a low tone of deceding, after a short pause, "This ride is not concluded, Margaret, and I owe you my most heartfelt thanks for its pleasure; it has bee one of the greatest happiness I ever enjoyed and, I dare hope, it will be the first of a long series we shall partake—say you hope so, to dear Margaret." He bent his head down, an looked in her face with that affection which young, ardent lover alone can command, an Margaret timidly put her hand on his arm

; "My fears are conquered, Stracy, I do

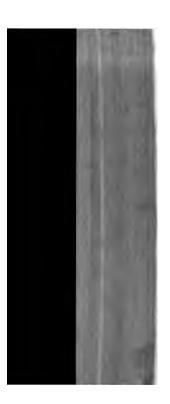
htly sparkled the eyes of his Lordship, at quivocal a declaration of her participation feelings; he thanked her more by looks ords, and, when he sprang from his horse, house door, to assist her to dismount, it ith the elasticity of youth, health, and ess.

nat moment, Lorrimer made his appearance, ning, "So you are at last returned, my I and Susan have been at home this hour half. Why, in the name of father Neptune, 1 leave us?"

iy, my good fellow," returned Egerton, ;, "you should say for what reason you need Margaret and myself; we lost our is consequence of your rapid advance. It ou are quite tired," he continued, to his mpanion, "but you must lay the blame he right offender; though I hope you will r rod be applied with mercy."

ep and burning blush mounted even to the f Margaret's hair, as her eyes met those over; and, while Lorrimer answered Stracy imilar strain of jest, on account of their absence without leave," she hastily renorder to change her riding dress.

ord Stracy shook young Bentham's hand, -mounting, he looked so supremely happy, se latter readily suspected what had oc-



wneiner hamman or bicas

Lieutenant Bentham I his noble friend, and the his disadvantage were s by his constant and a Margaret; and Lorrim pleasure from the happy countenance.

He was himself under Venus, and had, within Captain Beresford's cor Susan Murray; but the c destined for promulgatic mined by the prudent un had attained the rank c riage should be deferred, made him less solicitoushis sister, although he to the increasing devotio

At times, a distrustful less nobleman's intention his mind, but they, in tu have said, when he bec a pace which guaranteed the buoyancy of his irits. Not having seen his father since the vious day, his first visit was to the invalid, om he found alone, as the rest of the family re out; a fact he had previously ascertained m Dalston.

As he entered, the Earl closed his book, and, ding out his hand, said, with a smile, in reply his son's salutation, "I think I am somewhat ter to-day, thank you, my dear Stracy; but a are the last person I expected to see at this he of day. I thought you were engaged from me, this morning."

- 'I have been so, sir, but it is now four o'clock, i, after five hour's work, I fancy the mare is ill-disposed for her corn."
- 'And pray where have you been?"
- 'That, my Lord, I can scarcely tell, but I was companied by the Lieutenant and his sister."
- 'Humph! a pleasant man that, Stracy, I saw a frequently while you were abroad—think he ed here several times. By the bye, is he nking of getting employment again?"
- 'I have never enquired, sir, for I like his iety too much; he has all the good qualities of English tar, and the characteristics of a atleman."
- 'Glad it is so, Stracy, for your sake; but he a sister, or cousin, I think?" And the Earl ked steadily at his son, as he spoke.
- 'A step-sister, sir, you have seen her, I think?"

"I believe she had the care of the children, short time," returned his father. "A mode looking girl, was she not?"

"A beautiful one, I should also say, I Lord!"

"The tastes of old and young ever have a will differ, you know, Stracy: but she has a fortune I suppose?"

"Not a sou, I fancy, my Lord."

"Do you know anything of her history? shas been well educated, according to the Coutess's account."

All these interrogations were put by the Ea with studied indifference of manner, though I was all the time attentive to the impression h words made on his son.

"All I know about her, my Lord, was communicated to me by herself."

"Indeed," interrupted his father, "are yo already upon such friendly terms?"

"My dear father," said Stracy, "I have alread been acquainted with Margaret six months—lon enough for me to appreciate her numerous attractions; and I have this morning been made monhappy than I can describe, by her acceptance my love. You must not wonder, therefore, if she have made me acquainted with her situation i life, she is every thing a man could wish a with to be, and I am sure, sir, you have too great wish to see me me happy to regard a girl's war of dower."

"Your wife ought to have some money—but o you think you are old or steady enough to larry yet, Stracy?" returned the Earl, "you are hitherto shewn all the fickleness of the fly your attachments, and probably you have loved wenty girls at different times, as well as you do liss Bentham."

"My dear sir, there I think you do me more r less than justice. I never loved enough to arter my liberty. Indeed, sir, I have not offered by affections rashly."

"Your affections, Stracy," returned the Earl, ravely, after a moment's pause, "I do not fear or, so much as those of any young lady to whom ou may unite yourself. I fear your mind is not ufficiently made up, to resign heart and soul to natrimony—other women may draw off the ttention due to a wife."

"But, indeed, my Lord, I am quite determined o renounce my tricks," said Egerton, colouring leeply, "all my wild oats are sown, I assure you."

"Well, my dear boy," answered the aged nobleman, in accents of unusual kindness, "I hope they are, both for your sake and that of the lady upon whom your choice may fall—It has never been ny intention to controvert any reasonable attachment you may form. I shall not, therefore, opere your marriage with Miss Bentham, on the core of want of property, if, on investigation, I ind herself and friends such as I shall be grati-

fied in considering part of my family. Still Incommend you to reflect most seriously, my dear Stracy, on the important duties you undertake in becoming a husband."

"Do not fear me, sir," returned Stracy, with animation, "I will try to be all you wish, though I feel I scarcely deserve the great kindness with which you have listened to my request—I am sure, sir, you will like Margaret."

"I am too old to view things with the eyes of a lover, Stracy, but we shall see, whether those of a father will be as acceptable."

"That you may be assured of, my dear father," replied his son, "we shall be ever most anxious to be your grateful and dutiful children."

"Well, well, my boy, now tell me something of the Benthams—I will see the Lieutenant on the subject, to-morrow."

It did not require many minutes for Lord Stracy to give Lord Trefoil the little information he had gained from Margaret, regarding her family; and, although the Earl again mentioned his regret at her poverty, he assured his son that should not be any obstacle to a probability of his happiness—"In fact, my dear Stracy, I shall be well pleased to see you settled with a woman you really love; for I believe, such is the goodness of your heart, that a true affection would wean you from many propensities which you have brought with you from the Continent, and which you well know I greatly disapprove."

"I am highly indebted to you, sir," returned racy, "for your good opinion of me, although is partly qualified by reproach, which I will deavour not to merit in future. Shall I, sir, juest Bentham to come up here?"

"No! I will write to him myself, presently," urned the Earl, adding—"I wish, Stracy, I would see whether the Countess be returned." The joyous Egerton hastened to do his father's ding, and, having delivered the message, with ich he was charged, he accompanied Algernon the kennel and stables for an hour, before the ssing-bell rang.

The dinner party had now dwindled away to a y small one, and as soon as the Countess had an from table, carrying off her three children her train, our hero exclaimed, as he pushed decanter to his taciturn companion, "Come, race, drink your wine, man, it is no use dying love this time."

- 'Why, not exactly, Stracy," returned Tulk, cing a smile, "I must get over my disappointnt I know; but do you not think Jessy would re suited me?"
- 'You seemed to think so at least, my good ow. I wish to heavens! you were as fortunate myself; my father has consented to my rrying Margaret."
- 'You marry, Stracy!" interrupted Horace, in eigned surprise.
- 'Yes, I—Lord Stracy,"—returned the other, ghing, "mortally wounded at last—perhaps, vol. III.

if all things prosper, Clara and I may each united in holy wedlock at the same time. Wa pity you are not yet ordained, Horace,—might perform the ceremony!"

"Marry!" repeated Tulk again, "have preally made up your mind to so desperate measure? why, it was only a day or two sityou were rejoicing in your own liberty."

"True, Horace, but that was only becaus was able to yield that liberty to my own lit Margaret. It is true

A Bachelor leads an easy life;

but I do not know why a married man sho not do the same, therefore I am resolved to it." He then related several particulars of conversation with his father; but seeing his frie looked gloomy, he added, in an altered ton "but tell me more about Beresford's rejection you said you would sometime, but I forget whe

"Oh! it is not worth while to say any this further of it; thank you, Stracy," returned Tu "rather let me congratulate you. I hope y will be happy."

"You do not doubt it, I trust—I am not one hug my galling chains, Horace, but one to so them, if they do not fit me lightly,"

"I fear you are a sad renegade for a husbal I trust all your thoughtless habits will be forg ten, or you will have no chance of happiness."

"Upon my word," said his Lordship, in a to of pique, "it is too much of a good thing to me fears and lectures on every side. You knewhat our great Poet says, Let us have wine, and women, mirth and laughter, Sermons, and soda water, the day after.

"Now, so think I, therefore fill your glass, and lock up all your advice for a rainy day—I am going out for half an hour presently."

"Brookside again," said Horace, enquiringly; "Have you seen Jessy to day?"

"No," returned Egerton, "I have seldom seen her since your defeat—shall I execute any commission for you, when we meet?"

"No, thank you, Stracy, I must have nothing more to say in that quarter, and the sooner I forget all about it the better."

"Well," answered the young Lord, rising, "I will leave you in very good company, ergo that bottle of claret—I must have another thimbleful, though, I believe,"—and, having helped himself, Stracy continued, "by Jove! that is the best wine in my Lord's cellar."

"It is different from what we generally drink, is it not, Stracy?"

"Taste—approve an' you will, but hold your tongue, Cupid—am I not inspector-general of the cellar, while the Earl is laid up?" Horace smiled. "Come," added Stracy, raising his brimming glass, "let us have a toast—fill—fill, man—no shirking, fill I say—now then—Jessy Murray! to the healths of Jessy Murray and Margaret Bentham, and may you soon be as happy as I am now, Horace." The young men drained their glasses, though Tulk looked melancholy, and, after a few minutes' conversation, they left the dining-room and separated.

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to see my sister a part of your family—she is young, my Lord; with the exception of myself, she has no protector, and my profession must soon call me away again; therefore it will be a great satisfaction, to one so deeply interested as lam for my sister, to have the prospect of seeing her comfortably, I may say, splendidly, settled, before I again quit the country." All this was very satisfactory to Lord Trefoil, who, well knowing Stracy's inconstant propensities, wished much to see him united to a young person whose connection would not disgrace his son's choice.

It had been his Lordship's constant fear, while Egerton was abroad, that he would commit some egregious folly in the matrimonial way, and this continual dread was perhaps the cause of his closing so readily with this his son's first application to him—Margaret was truly respectable, although not of noble parentage. Lord Trefoil felt he should not be ashamed of introducing her, as his daughter-in-law, and Stracy would most probably become steady by being united to a girl of his own choice. For this reason, he overruled Lorrimer's petty scruples, and had the pleasure to find every thing go on according to his wish, at the close of this important interview.

"You will, perhaps, have an opportunity of counselling Egerton upon the subject of his thoughtlessness, Mr. Bentham," said the Earl, at parting.

"I shall not take advantage of it, my Lord,"

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pare to follow them, said, as he offered his other arm to the boy, "What are you hanging in the wind for, Algernon? Let us bear up in company for the Captain's."

The three young men proceeded accordingly, and Stracy met with as gratifying a reception as he could wish from his bride elect. During the few succeeding days, the principal part of his time was devoted to Margaret, though he still found a vacant hour to pay a welcome visit to the North Farm, where Nina—the fascinating Nina, awaited his appearance with impatience; wholly confining herself to the garden, where she wandered by the hour in solitude, she hailed his approach with joy, and the difficulty with Stracy was—when to effect his diurnal escape.

Twice in the first week, after his proposal to Miss Bentham, he narrowly missed being detected in issuing from Ralph Plowden's, and, in which time, also, both Algernon and Horace bantered him upon his evening excursions—greatly to his annoyance, as it was his constant endeavour to conceal his secret expeditions. At length, he told Nina it was out of his power to see her so frequently, and, although at first very reluctant, she consented to the intervention of one day between his calls.

The day succeeding that upon which he had entered into this agreement, and which was the twelfth from the date of her arrival, Lord Trefoil for the first time, left his room, and both Lorrimer and his sister were in the saloon to con-

gratulate him. Stracy was leading the invalid
to the easy chair prepared for him, and the rest
of the party, anxious to express their pleasure
at his re-appearance, were standing around,
when a note was presented to our hero, who
threw it down on a neighbouring table, without
casting one look at it, on ascertaining, by a hasty
interrogatory—that it did not require an answer.

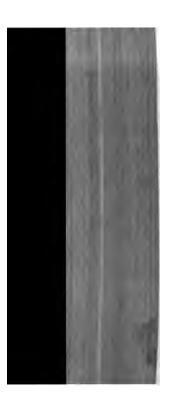
One of his little sisters instantly raised and scrutinized it, and, in a few minutes, carried it again to her brother, entreating him to give her the seal attached. It was a simple request, but, nevertheless, Egerton's colour rose, and, telling the child not to be so troublesome, he consigned the coveted impression, with the billet, to his pocket. "Oh! do give it me, Stracy," cried Helen, "it is such a beautiful coach and four. Pray ask him, Miss Bentham, I am sure he will do as you ask."

Margaret looked at her lover, and the suit was gained, but she remarked that, for some minutes, his temper seemed more ruffled than she had before seen it. The fact was, that the communication was an unexpected and unwelcome one from Madame Carrotti, which he did not discover until Helen called his attention to it; when, equally vexed and surprised, the most prominent feeling he had was a dread of discovery.

The circumstance, however, passed off, and again, that afternoon, did he cross the fields to the north farm, but not, as before, unobserved. No: Horace, the disconsolate Horace, was stroll-

ing with a book towards the town, when he saw Stracy suddenly emerge from the door of the . dwelling, with a female on his arm. For a moment. Tulk supposed it must have been Mrs. Plowden, whose habitation he knew it to be-but in the next, he recognized the graceful elegance of Nina to belong to one of a far more dangerous station. Screened from observation by the copse, through which he was rambling, Horace, for one short instant, paused in utter astonishment; a host of conflicting doubts and fears for the son of his patron-of the brother of his adoption, rose in his mind, in spite of his affection—his former trust in Stracy. Astonishment fairly rivetted him to the spot, as he saw Egerton, with equal tenderness and solicitude, support the fascinating stranger towards the place of his concealment. Then anxiety, to avoid distressing his misguided friend, prompted him to effect a hasty retreat, but, without discovering himself. he could not, and, although grieved and shocked, Horace would not willingly call the blush of shame and detection into the cheek of his noble friend.

"With me, dear, but misguided Stracy," thought he, "your character is safe. I will not call the rebellious blood to your cheek; chance has informed me of the truth of my former suspicions, and, there is no longer a mystery appertaining to your frequent evening expeditions. Well! I did not expect this," and he sighed deeply, as he turned away, and approached



farm; and it shot a pang of the young tutor, to ob: which the lady converse commanded. But short himself to note this, as turned his back than leisurely toward home. the new light that had greatly he deplored the wickedness, which Eger ning into, by seeking the at the same time that his believed, even his heart. "But, perhaps," though the house, perhaps I w Wild he is, but not so cr lieve he is attached to M may not yet have quite lighter love, which has him. Poor fellow! perha more to be pitied than

striving, ineffectually,

CHAPTER XXII.

And wilt thou leave me thus?
And have no more pity
Of him that loveth thee;
Alas, thy cruelty!
And wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay! say nay!

WYATT.

It was a morning or two after this, that the hero of our tale was, for a wonder, busily employed within doors, in writing according to the Earl's dictation; when the tranquillity of the apartment was invaded by the announcement of Captain Gurney. Lord Trefoil's brow darkened, and he cast a hasty look at his son, who, with a sparkling eye, threw down his pen, and rose to meet his friend. For one brief moment, let us pause, to look at the intruder. Tall and slight, he possessed neither figure nor feature remarkable for symmetry, although, while standing beside him, his profile might have been deemed fine. His complexion was of that sanguine hue which peculiarly belongs to, or rather accom-

panies red hair; denoting, too frequently, a temper as warm as the tint of the curls which clustered on his fair forehead. His keen grey eye was deeply set, and appeared ever vigilant and suspicious, while his mouth possessed a curvature at the corners, which could not fail to convey an expression of scorn to a countenance, where the bright smile of amiability was greatly needed, to soften down other defects; gentlemanly and fashionable in his manner, the traces of dissipation were plainly discernible in his whole appearance, as he carelessly returned the cordial salutation of the young Viscount.

"The Earl—your father, I believe," he said, turning to where the invalid sat, "allow me to congratulate you, my dear Lord, on the restoration of your health," and he extended his hand, with much apparent sincerity.

Lord Trefoil, who knew little of the Captain to his advantage, and who entirely disapproved of his acquaintance for Stracy, entrenched himself within all the chilling reserve and haughtiness of his character; and, although polite, was not sufficiently encouraging to induce the young man to remain long in his society. A few minutes of constrained conversation on one side, and of easy and impertinent confidence on the other, terminated Captain Gurney's first interview, for many months, with the father of his friend.

should scarcely have bearded the lion in

his den, you may be assured, Stracy," said the soldier, in a low tone, as the library door closed behind them, "had I been aware of it—but now it is over, I am glad I have done the civil, for your sake."

"I am much obliged to you, my dear fellow," returned Egerton, "but am sorry you did not meet with a more flattering reception; but when did you arrive—last evening?"

"Yes, by coach."

"And you found Lord Augustus flourishing," pursued Stracy, "I have not met him the last week or two."

"Quite so—notwithstanding a venison dinner the day before yesterday. He is going, I find, to Newmarket, in a day or two, and intends to leave me in charge of my aunt, and the fair Isabella," and a scornful smile, for a moment, played over Gurney's features.

"Come, that is excellent, gallant Captain, we shall have no surveillance in that quarter. Shall we pay a visit to the Italian?" These few sentences passed as Stracy crossed the hall for his hat, when our hero summoned Dalston, and bade him tell his groom to be at Conway Priory with the mare, at three o'clock. Then hurrying down the steps, Gurney said, with an air of much solicitude, "Well! Stracy, how has our business with Nina sped? No difficulties, I hope?"

"No, fortunately," replied our hero, "but I have been in a devil of a fright, more than once

—indeed, I am not quite sure I have forgiver you, for not arranging matters better—you pro mised to get rid of her."

"I believe I have hitherto acted up to my part of the engagement, Stracy," returned his companion, somewhat haughtily.

"Ditto," said Egerton, laughing. "Why, you have been taking a lesson out of the Earl's book, my good friend."

"A man may become a horse, by being kept in a stable," returned the other, with a sneer.

"Upon my honour, Gurney, Nina will not thank me for bringing you to see her, in your present mood—she is not well either, poor thing!"

" Not well! Stracy, I did not know that."

"Oh! I fancy she is only nervous—out of spirits, from being so much alone."

"I hope you have not neglected her, my Lord?" answered the Captain, interrogatively, while his searching eye was fixed full upon Egerton; "remember she is a stranger in a strange land, and has been wholly dependent upon you for happiness, comfort, and consolation; and, a woman in her situation must need such things, even making the best of it."

"I assure you, I have done every thing lared, consistent with prudence, Gurney; I have seen her almost every day, at the risk of discovery—but I have a wife in view, and my character is too etherial to bear such an investi

gation, as any suspicion on this point would entail."

- "Certainly," replied the soldier; "but what, in the fiend's name, do you mean by talking about a wife?"
- "Simply, because I love, and am beloved; and a few months, nay weeks, I trust, will find me and my lady love one and the same."
- "Pshaw! Stracy, you are raving; you will never cast aside your 'evil propensities,' as my governor would say."
- "That remains to be proved, amico mio; but how is your father—your family; come, enlighten me upon the affairs of the home department."
- "That I can readily do. My sire bears his loss like a man who has all his life been only second in command in his own house, and feels as if be had lost his right hand, though my sister Kate bids fair to rule as paramount as my poor mother; and the detrimentals look like sparrows after being caged, all very merry from emancipation; though I verily believe they have only escaped the pan to fall into the fire; for Kate's government is a second edition of their thraldom."
 - "And yourself, most potent sceptic?" asked Egerton.
 - "Oh! I am too modest to give an account of myself," returned Gurney with a laugh; "so will leave you to draw your own conclusions; a

few weeks have not wrought much alteration in me."

In this manner they gaily conversed, until they reached Ralph Plowden's, into whose modest dwelling they were unhesitatingly admitted.

During their visit, it may not be amiss to give a short account of the Honourable William Gurney. He was the eldest and favourite son of Lord John Gurney, by a second marriage with a sister of Lord Augustus Conway; and had been from an early age the idol of a weak, but irritable, father, who was a martyr to the gout, and thus almost rendered incapable of exercising a necessary watchfulness over a vouth of high spirit in his outset in life. His commission in "the Guards" procured him a passport into the best society; but, unfortunately, his taste led him to seek that which was beneath him. Thus he became a man of the world, ran his round of pleasure, and, by the time he was three-and-twenty, grew tired of doing duty in the " Household brigade;" and being a star of the third or fourth magnitude in the vortex of fashion. An attachment he had formed with his cousin, Miss Conway, in an hour of thoughtlessness, being also opposed by her father, Lord Augustus, induced him to quit her vicinity for a time; and Lord Stracy having just then determined to go abroad, they mutually embraced the advantage of leaving together.

Lord Augustus Conway, in discountenancing his nephew's suit, was alone actuated by the consideration of the extreme youth of his lovely and only child, she being at that time scarcely sixteen; the connexion pleased him, and it was not, therefore, difficult for the young lovers, backed by the remonstrances of their friends, to persuade the fond parent to permit the engagement to hold good, during the politic separation. In this frame of mind, the young people parted, the love token was exchanged, and the mighty ocean rolled between them.

Little of his time had been passed in England since that period; and short and hurried were the opportunities Gurney had enjoyed of being in the society of the young Isabella; the effervescence of love had flown off, and the dark reality alone remained. He regarded Isabella as his future wife, but his affection dwindled away to that demanded by relationship.

Such were his feelings, when the death of his mother—a parent for whom he had ever entertained more fear than love—called him home, instead of visiting Highfield, as he had intended. He, however, allowed a very short time to elapse before he disengaged himself from the affectionate efforts of his family to detain him in Devonshire; and leaving his sister Kate, his father's only child by his first lady, to undertake the sole care and responsibility of a large family of younger



gate previous to sepan paler than upon her fibrilliant eye was lighted of passion, and her the agitation of the unfarewell.

"When may I expensive murmured.

"To-morrow, my N perhaps, even to-night, pressed his hand, and i joined his friend who tance in advance on the Lord Stracy had alre

Lord Stracy had alre Isabella Conway; had a admired her beauty; t ment with her cousin, attention upon her. B tiful blush, which was his own and Gurney her the prettiest girl garet excepted. Is

was destined for the bar; she greeted her cousin warmly, shook hands with Stracy, with the ease of old acquaintanceship; and, having introduced Mr. Eardly Sweetman to the latter, whose proffered arm she took, she led the party into her flower garden; where she rattled on so fast, and so pleasantly, that the gentlemen were unconscious of the time, that so rapidly fled, until the lively girl exclaimed, as she held up her small repeater,

"See, see, how late it is; you have made me waste an hour-and-a-half with you. What shocking idle creatures you all are."

"We cannot call it waste of time to be in your society, Miss Conway," returned Stracy; "whatever you may find ours. I really thought we had not been here more than a third of that time."

"Oh! I know what your compliments mean, my Lord," she replied, laughing; "nevertheless, I am obliged to you."

"And what do they mean; may I presume to ask, Miss Conway?"

"Just as much as one of my gallant cousin's blank cartridges, which make a brilliant discharge, plenty of noise and smoke, my Lord, and mean about as much;" and again the merry Isabella laughed unrestrainedly, in which Egerton joined; for he cared little whether his flatteries exploded or not. A look from the Captain, however, arrested her thoughtless mirth, and soon after

returning to the his mare, and Brookside.

"What, outmet a servant is annoying intelli-

" All but Mis is in the garden " Alone?"

"Yes, my Lo

"Very well, I may take the he and Stracy then rite walk, which. As he drew nea struck his ear, why, he quicken which had so al visiting Brooksi received of Jess a short, sharp intruder, upon v leaped.

"What, on the Lordship, as he hesitation. "D cease."

He had now who was alone a on seeing Lord the arbour at the moments enable wave him a look half angry, half reproachful, as he offered her the customary salutations.

- "Margaret is not at home, I find," he said.
- "No, my Lord," replied she coolly; "the party waited for you until three o'clock, when thinking you would not pay your accustomed early visit to-day, they set off for K——."
- "Well, at least I am fortunate in being able to offer you my services, for you must be very lonely by yourself here; even Bran was away upon 'secret service,'" and a slight, a very slight smile passed over our hero's countenance; "perhaps I ought to apologize, Jessy, for having unintentionally become a mar-plot."
- "Oh! not at all, my Lord. I came here to enjoy the air off the water; not feeling well this afternoon."

After a few common-place remarks, a pause followed, for Stracy knew not how to commence his investigation of her uncle's objection to her union with his friend, and Jessy was not likely to begin the subject.

However, Miss Murray was the first to break silence, which she did by saying, abruptly, "My uncle has determined that I shall accept an invitation from a kind friend of my poor mother's, to spend a month or two on the coast. Do you know anything of Hastings, my Lord?"

"I have frequently been there, though rarely to stay more than a day or two."

"I have alt my Lord, car rejoined his recovering her

"Most cons are many beat but among the visiting, Hollime particularle But shall you quitting Brook a lower tone.

"Those on separation fro she replied, w could not acco

"I am sorr of gravity. " one member of worthy a the replied, with shook.

" You erred to leave excep

"Pardon impertinent," esteem and r have made m to believe he ning a heart Horace owed

I should not have ventured to broach this subject, which must be a delicate one, even had I mot been mistaken."

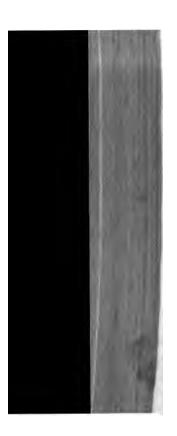
"My uncle, my Lord," returned Jessy, somewhat haughtily, "is wholly innocent of the charge you would insinuate; and I must say that even the very intimate terms upon which you are here, cannot authorise the great liberty you take in speaking on this topic."

"I entreat you to believe the sincerity of my regret, Miss Murray," said Lord Stracy; "in having given you a moment's uncasiness. I was entirely actuated by a wish to promote your happiness, I assure you."

"I deeply thank your Lordship," returned Jessy coldly.

"Yet, let me remark, how rare—how excellent are the qualities of Tulk," said Egerton.

"Perhaps they are, my Lord," she replied impatiently. "I esteem Mr. Tulk as a friend;" and she laid a stress upon the last word; "but, my father's daughter cannot fancy herself the wife of a poor tutor, dependant upon his patron's bounty, for daily bread. Besides, we rarely contemplate the moon while the sun is up;" and a contemptuous curl of the lip disfigured her pretty mouth: she then added, hastily, "your choice was a free one, I believe, my Lord?" for an instant she essayed to raise her eyes to his face as she spoke, but she could not; his look of suspicion, of new-born intel-



what to say, after the the idea which was now until she again was the saying haughtily, " would oblige me by lea which you invaded un is far more suitable soo

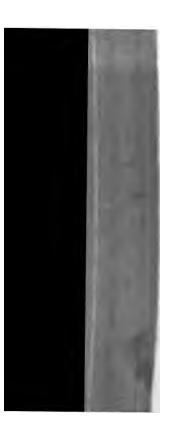
which you invaded un is far more suitable so Disregarding the bi Stracy said, "Miss Mu to be obeyed;" and, sli point of quitting her, w approaching was heard tending emotions of sh sensibility, Jessy turne exclaimed her compan ported her with a fri sake! rouse yourself-ftone, his words of ent Lorrimer; who, hearin garden, had hastened t garet retired to her roc thus clung to our here came upon the scene.

Astonishment was s

were the means of its transportation—not in his power certainly, and in a moment he was beside his noble friend.

- "I cannot bring any, Stracy," he said, "but what is the matter?"
- "Upon my soul! I know as little as yourself," replied he: "but I suppose Miss Murray can inform you."
- "Oh! my Lord," exclaimed she, bursting into tears, "you are ungenerous"—and, disengaging herself with an effort from him, she extended her hand to Lorrimer, adding, "protect me from his unwelcome importunities."—Lord Stracy coloured highly, under the searching glance of young Bentham, who thought, from appearances, that Egerton had been intruding himself, and perhaps his attentions, upon a girl the sailor loved as a sister, and for whom he had every respect.
- "I will resign my post to you, Lorrimer, most willingly," said Egerton, carelessly, without noticing his looks; "Jessy will rejoice to see me give up an office I assumed only at the call of friendship;" and his eye met Lorrimer's with a look of dauntless rectitude, as he turned to leave the spot.
- "Doubtless your kindness will be appreciated by Jessy, my Lord, when she has recovered herself," said the other. Stracy did not vouchsafe any answer—anger for a moment darkened his brow, but Lorrimer, who was now endeavouring to soothe his companion, did not observe it.

VOL III. M



affections to follow a w , as been my leve, until garet, kast i rought my anchorage. But, surely stalled the danger.-m not worked their way far into the beart of this gi manner, impressed me, tichef that I am loved .who play with edged to the amusement, and, th perhaps I have tried th deeply, for the happing term, certainly ; but has and partly succeeded in I cannot banish my foli could only shake off Ni would go right; for it. Jessy-all the women aye, and love, me too, obliged to shipwreck my general admiration, in amatory damsel with only shall be my wife "-

Rowever, dispelled by the appearance of Miss Bentham, who, from a window in the first story of the house, cried,

- "And pray where have you been, Stracy?"
- "At Conway Priory," he replied.
- "Ah! what do you deserve, my Lord, for your desertion to day?"
- "A fair hearing, in the first place—and a seal to my full pardon, in the second," answered he, smiling.
- "But I do not think I shall grant either, Stracy, for I mean to punish you for playing the agreeable to Isabella Conway all the morning."
- "Oh! I cry your mercy, fair Lady—you are too hard upon me—pray descend, my fairy queen, do not be obdurate," and his Lordship sang merrily,

"Heigh-ho! what shall I do— Shall I come in at the window to you."

"I will not give you that trouble, my Lord," replied Margaret, closing the sash, and hastening to join her lover; whose peace was quickly made with her.

Margaret, indeed, had now become attached to our hero with all the warmth and impetuosity which characterises the first love of a heart unsulied by the world—a heart of one in the early dawn of womanhood, before deceit and suspicion have had time and opportunity to impair the full confidence of a generous nature—she loved her Stracy for himself; and she loved with the ardency of eighteen. And why should she not?



along the high road of

By the time Jessy and of the family, the forme posure, but avoided ren than necessary in com who, on his part, was her, for he felt that, how if his suspicion were to much, very much, more acquaintance than had offer, or her to accept whether he was since voted as he was to M conduct in a different have done a few months heart untouched by lovtrifle, and be as unscatl

But now, knowing I trial to himself were an tions, he pitied Jessy, a haviour, although he en dispel, the idea he had ference. Stracy posses feeling mind, although it hy his follies, and the

rboured a remembrance of what had passed garden; and, after having accounted in the and indeed, only way he could for his abby saying he had been monopolized by in Gurney—and lamenting, in concert with iends, the tardy arrival of the wished-for ch from Robert Bentham, who was supto be in or near the French capital, Stracy is leave, promising to come very early the ing day, and, rather than deprive Margaret society until so late in the afternoon, he sed he would bring his friend with him.





Friends took th' alarm.
The name of Brooks wit
Others, more lax in virti
Sported the wink of cun
"He'll buy, no doubt, v
A little gallantry becom

AGAIN at liberty to thi home, Egerton ponder of Horace, whose relt confidant he could no kind and considerate h How opposite to my wl thought only of, and follooks individual feeling of others—How far he shine me! These and this mind, and when he there was a softness in

the follies, of which he thought himself, peraps, the sole depository, had given him cause
or disquietude. His observations were, howver, only mental, and the Earl being now able
o join the family circle—a degree of restraint
was shed over the conversation of the young men,
to which they had not been subject for some time.
Stracy was strictly interrogated upon that day's
proceedings, and was unwillingly obliged to listen
to his father's unqualified disapproval of the
ci-devant guards-man.

As Lord Augustus Conway's nephew, however, he said he supposed he must tolerate him, and Egerton was at liberty, if he pleased, to ask him to dinner. A permission our hero knew would be more readily taken advantage of by him, than accepted by Gurney. Still he fully appreciated Lord Trefoil's kindness, for he was now convinced that his father was anxious to attach him by encreased kindness to his home, from which, during the previous year or two, he had greatly estranged himself;—and a consequent feeling of satisfaction pervaded Egerton's mind. Although ashamed of his unfortunate discovery, the more it occupied his thoughts, he could not make up his mind to tell his friend his feelings—his regret, on the transaction, that night, as he had intended, although he stood a moment at Tulk's room door, undecided whether to enter or not, before he sought his own chamber.

His slumbers were rarely disturbed by daily



in arousing him. "Why
of the seven sleepers,"

"And you, Stracy, n
champions," returned th
is as powerful as those
be. But what has brou
be early, I am sure."

"You are right, lear
yet struck eight, but I
question; nay, lie still,
where you are. Do you
refused you?" and, as
seated himself upon the

"Do you?" enquired with some surprise. "That is unimportant, nobleman, "answer me i

intently upon his compa

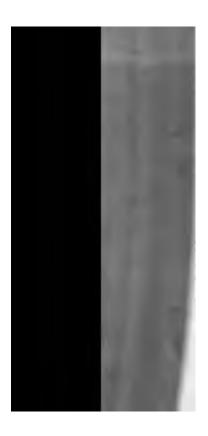
For an instant, Tulk
Why press this question

"I know not how to express the sorrow, the humiliation, I feel, Tulk," said Stracy, in a tone of unfeigned regret, "when a few hasty words, yesterday, prompted me to believe that your happiness had suffered so materially by my folly—indeed—"

"My dearest Lord Stracy," said Horace, "do not distress yourself upon my account, in consequence of any discovery you have made."

"But I am distressed, Tulk, and ought to be so, for I have been led, by my thoughtlessness, to act most cruelly towards you and Miss Murray -do not interrupt me, for, once in my life, I am serious and resolute. By your caution, or rather vour reserve. I am certain vou are too well acquainted with the unfortunate circumstance which has damped your hopes!" Horace made no answer, and he continued, "to say I am sorry-deeply grieved, would neither express my feelings, nor satisfy your indignation; but, if you will only point out any way in which I can expiate my fault, I will joyfully follow your directions; and, indeed, Horace, I would much rather have received your severest reproaches been abused—almost hated—than calmly listened to. and even saved from shame and vexation. What would you have me do?"

"Free yourself, my dear—dear Stracy, from the dangerous and unworthy habits into which your too volatile disposition has drawn you," returned the other, pressing his hand affection-



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्र मा स्थाप्त हा ness, if I have taken an undue liberty, in making your generosity the vehicle for the attainment of my most earnest desire. But I entreat you not to suppose that my disappointment is at all owing to you. I believe it has always been Captain Beresford's wish that Jessy should be Harry's wife, and that is the reason he gave me, on my application, though I do not think she has any other attachment than this unfortunate one."

"Then how did you learn it, Horace?" enquired Stracy, all his momentary irritation evaporating as his interest was raised.

"From her thoughtless sister," said Tulk, "though Susan's communication only confirmed my former suspicions; for Miss Murray almost confessed, on the day I spoke to her, that she loved another; though I did not then ascertain, positively who that other was."

"You know now," returned Stracy, bitterly, "and I know too, to my shame; but still, Horace, you have not given me the satisfaction of doing any thing for you."

"I have already acquainted you with my principal wish," answered his companion, quietly, "I require no reparation."

"Say a living when I come to my title, a bishopric, even, Horace. I will move heaven and earth for you. Any—every thing but this."

"Thank you; no, Stracy. Great credit you would do to the Earldom, certainly," and as he spoke, a slight smile passed over his features.

The colour mounted into the face of our hero.



returned Horace, "as yo vated resignation; you wi sometimes in your gayest." I shall think of you as answered his Lordship, a who has been more than one to whom I would havin my power."

"Except what you are asling from his recumbent po

one to whom I would have in my power."

"Except what you are asly ing from his recumbent power up, Egerton, your father." Oh! you have such bankers, that you need now you wrong me with respectate them. Why do you "Because, Egerton, I I person who now resides Tulk spoke slowly, and de "Oh! what the Italian sumed carelessnesss, "poo

health—consigned to me, husband in the south—ha.

"Are you sincere, Stracy," asked his friend, doubtingly, "it is strange to trust a pretty wife wit 1 one so young and wild as you."

"Nay, verily, I will not swear," said his Lordship, laughing; "I am studying the virtues come, Horacc, say—have I made the "amende honorable?" He held out his hand, which was cordially accepted, and Horace was soon left alone to complete his toilette.

Having thus eased his conscience, Stracy set off with a lighter heart for the Captain's, where he passed a pleasant morning with Margaret, in whose company he took a long ramble to Conway Priory. But it is not in our power—neither would it be interesting, to detail the circumstances of each successive day; suffice it to say that every thing appeared to go on smoothly for several weeks, and Stracy's time flew away, as he himself expressed it, on the wings of the wind. During this treacherous calm, however, the lurid clouds of fate were only concentrating their forces; and the storm, longer deferred, fell with two-fold severity in the sequel.

"Do any of you go to the Q——Races, good people?" was Lord Stracy's first question, one day, on entering the drawing-room at Brookside, in company with Captain Gurney, who was now his constant companion.

- "No, not that we know of," returned Margaret.
- "Lorrimer, did you know about them?" asked the young nobleman.



being there."

"Well, that I think velocity good, I am told, and the this year than have been entered my mare, and yit she win, Margaret. Be her your name. Come, I again turning to the sailo will you bet upon her?"

"My shot finds its way fast enough, without go Lieutenant, laughing, an "You never told us,

going to run a horse, & reproachfully, "or I 1 Lorrimer to take me."

"Suppose you try now than never."

"Oh! no, I am engag not the principal race on Street replied in the

Stracy replied in the some time spent in disc

"Perhaps I may," she said, in answer, "but I sometimes fear he will never write; though Lorrimer says he is, most likely, on his way to Sicily, and the letter will have to follow him. But you will be home on Friday, Stracy."

"Most likely, unless something new occur. Oh! I had almost forgotten to tell you that Clara has signified by letter, this morning, her intention of being at home the end of the week, therefore Lady Trefoil desired me to ask you and Lorrimer to dine with us on Saturday. But Clara will be quite out of spirits, I suppose, as she leaves her 'true knight' in London."

The invitation thus cordially given was willingly accepted; and the visit concluded with a promise from Egerton to return and dine there that evening. Captain Gurney was engaged, or he would also have made one of the party.

Jessy Murray had been absent ever since the time she had specified to Lord Stracy; and Horace having overcome his pristine vexation, Egerton had almost forgotten his self reproaches, unless he noticed a transient gloom on Tulk's brow; or when he heard from Susan or Margaret of the indisposition of their friend.

Lorrimer, however, silently observed that our hero rarely referred to Jessy voluntarily, and that he looked uncasy when the instability of



affection for Margaret t which he might have corrent love, because althout the affection of our her his trifling propensities did, and it is allowable

Thus Lorrimer looked to his sister's marriage; the whole of the family, the connexion, and trea kindness of a near relat

With sentiments of the dence, Margaret parted lover—a confidence gen of truth—a confidence smiles of youth, ardour parted from him with joyful re-union: but, a passage from the acmè of the confidence smiles of youth, ardour parted from him with joyful re-union but, a passage from the acmè of the confidence in the con

CHAPTER XXIV.

Oh! how this spring of love resembleth
Th' uncertain glory of an April day,
Which now shows all her beauty to the sun,
And by and by a cloud takes all away.

SHAKSPBARE.

It has already been mentioned that Miss Bentham was to pass the day of the principal races at Q- with a friend; and it so happened that that friend, Mrs. Brown, of the Retreat, had endeavoured to afford her young neighbour a morning of much entertainment, by taking her with her own family to Q--. On the second morning, therefore, after Egerton's departure, the good lady called; and, making her proposed excursion known, after many entreaties, persuaded the Lieutenant to permit his sister to go, on condition he should also be of the party. Elated partly with the novelty of the anticipated excursion, and partly with the idea of Stracy's pleasure at their meeting, the fond young girl could scarcely compose her feelings



every thing ready for described to seat the party they set off under the moster the weather was delight all buoyant with the Brown, with her daughter occupied the interior of Lorrimer, and a Mr. Cory of marriage with the eld

placed in the rumble. A pl hours brought them to bourhood of the race gr faculties found employn minute, in noting the v were presented to her ad-

The company was num sidering the insignificance rather late, it was some the situation could be secur party. Stationed at length from the ropes, Margaret hope of meeting her love.

without any appearance of Stracy, and insensibly her spirits flagged, or at least, moderated. This was quickly observed by Lorrimer, who immediately proposed a walk across the course to Mr. Cory, adding, for his sister's gratification, "I know Lord Stracy and Captain Gurney were to be here, and they will expect to be sought. I suppose." A cordial invitation to luncheon was sent by Mrs. Brown to his Lordship, and young Bentham set off, leaving Margaret to answer numberless questions respecting the heir of Trefoil, with whom it was well known the inmates of Brookside were on terms of intimacy; although the busy eye of common curiosity had not yet discovered the bond of affection which subsisted between Miss Bentham and our hero.

Lorrimer and Mr. Cory, equal strangers to Q—, walked on together a little way, when the latter encountering a friend, they stopped to exchange civilities, and Cory said, "Come, Monson, you are the very man we want, for you know every body, I believe. Can you tell Mr. Bentham whether Lord Stracy be here? and if so, where he may be found?"

"Oh! I have just parted from that ne'er do weel," returned the other. "You will find him," he continued, addressing Lorrimer, "near the winning post, at his old tricks," and he smiled expressively. "By my faith I wonder he ventures to sport 'la bellissima Nina' so near home." Lorrimer looked all astonishment;

gravely, as a suspicion of unbidden to his mind, mistaken. Beyond the you said, I should find he "Substitute winning cannot be wrong," rejoin as he took Cory's arm, conduct him to his party. Upon this, the Lieuter of his companions, and.

and ill-defined evil fore way through the crowd spot, where he was to join few minutes he came in s phaeton and handsome Stracy; for they were a repurchase, and one easily appearance now failed to crutification, for Eyerton gaily dressed and interewho, as well as himself, w

with Comes -

address him or not; but then he thought he might have made one of the party, and have nothing to do with his foreign companion. While he thus hesitated, the conversation of two men in a light cart close by, attracted his attention, and, by an invisible power, he seemed chained to the spot.

"Splendid cattle they are in that ere phaeton, Spicer," said one.

"So they ought to be, Joe," returned the other; "for they say that young Lord knows a good horse as well as any one; and I hope it be true, for Thompson tells me he has backed that mare of his many hundreds beyond what he can pay; beside being dipped already."

"Indeed," said Spicer; "then I suppose he marries, that his wife, that is to be, may pay his debts. He seems very fond on her, but she is too old for him, to my mind."

"That be'nt the lady he is going to church with, Joe," answered the other laughing; "that is a lady he keeps somewhere near Highfield." Here Lorrimer turned round suddenly, and fixed his eyes upon the speaker, with such an angry expression of countenance, that the man paused, which recalled Bentham to himself; and to avoid being thought a listener, he walked on towards Lord Stracy.

"You here, my dear fellow," cried Egerton, who was evidently exhilirated with wine, though

therished sister to be receiving the attentions of a man who was even reputed to be engaged to another within a few hundred vards. Still Lorrimer would not condemn him at once: he would see, hear, and judge for himself; for which reason he allowed Stracy to persuade, or appear to persuade, him to accept of some refreshment, and stay with the party. But Egerton's manner was hurried and boisterous, unlike what Lorrimer had previously seen, though the conduct of his female companion, who was not introduced, was so correct and lady-like, and at the same time so gay and affable to the whole party, that he found it impossible to determine who was the object of her preference; while the indignant sailor himself felt influenced by her attractions. There he was detained until the grand race of the day had been run, and the interest it occasioned in those around him, for a time made him forget his vigilance. The cup was won by Lord Stracy's mare, and the consequent libations soon placed our hero in such a state that the more prudent Lorrimer saw plainly that it was useless expecting any farther elucidation on the subject nearest his heart at that moment. He heard Egerton promise the stranger the new acquired prize; and grieved, angry, and disgusted, he hastily took leave of his erroneous friend, and returned to his original station.

And how had Margaret been employed, let

Cop, and after a tew money translation. Two or three classial acquaintances, to the provide themselves nothing remarkable occur was immediated to Marguniar the name of Long personaled to take a seat shoung bell for the cup. Miss Bentham, knowing laterested in the issue of though she knew not anxiously to the remarks and when he declared Longity, she could not stranslations. In Longity

antilities to the remarks and when he declared I winder, she could not st satisfaction. "I wonder is, she said, as she gas now throughd the course, would ascertain whether or not.

" If Miss Rentham d

- "Do you know him?" interposed Mrs. Brown, before Margaret could answer.
- "Yes, I know him for a hearty good fellow; but a wild one," replied he, carelessly.
- "Young and lively, I suppose," said another gentleman, smiling.
- "A little beyond that, I think," returned Loughton. "I knew him a good while in Paris, where I fancy the gaming tables must have made a sad inroad in his pocket."
- "Ah! a dangerous propensity that," rejoined the other. "He is young, too, and perhaps easily led astray. Who is that lady with him?" Margaret, who had listened with pain and surprise to these few sentences, started and turned pale at this question. No doubt of her future husband had ever yet crossed her mind; but now, when she heard strangers attack his character, she trembled for the coming answer.
- "Faith! I believe you had better not inquire," said Loughton, laughing. "A good looking fellow, like Stracy, with an Earldom in view; money for the moment, and little discretion in its use; need not be at a loss for society on a race course. I was told the other day that he was engaged to be married, but I do not believe it; he has never been of one mind in love affairs more than a fortnight at a time. He laughs at Cupid."
 - "A pretty character you give him, indeed," Vol. III.

The little next race: " and the little frequency of the male in the heart of one of Pour Margaret! her midoult and arony, could it until the return of Lorring to a word more, and on parton's kind a licitude, outdisposition, in menosyl reason to behave Longhto falschoold, for she knew not the charges had been mad unrefuted, except by her she knew not how to thin would not suppose Egei

mind and racked her soul.

In this state Lorrimer for glance was sufficient to tell had occurred in his absence with true affection her purguiety to dispul her also also.

beard him declared, and y

Lordship in the stand;" and, accordingly, in a few minutes he again left her, anxious to escape further interrogatory. But all pleasure had fled from Margaret; the novel scene had lost its charm, and it was with infinitely more joy that she heard the order given to return home, than she had felt in equipping herself for the expedition.

Lorrimer was silent respecting Straw, and Margaret, fearful lest her forebodings might be strengthened by his answer, dared not say more on the subject, as she felt sure Mrs. Brown and her daughters already had been made aware, by that day's occurrences, of the interest she had in every thing appertaining to our hero. One more pang, however, yet remained for that day's endurance—one pang, the severest, as it was the last; for, as she was looking languidly, and out of spirits, at the bustle created by the retreat of the company, her eye caught sight of the carriage of him she loved with all a girl's idolatry. By his side she saw the female she had heard so lightly spoken of, and a cold shudder ran through her veins, and appeared to settle into a heavy weight at her heart. Still she moved not, spoke not-her eyes, her thoughts were fixed upon him who of all others she most wished to see, and who now was the means of procuring her one of the most agonizing pangs to which a lover is subject.

Wildly she gazed, as Stracy, with inebriated

that the borses were nations, and Noral ser ina Elimbi si psibit a Madama Curretti or his test to let mine: and meeting in select the p garet. All the blood in h un in fale. Eina fe Acras ther issuer: and -and periodly sclered. will multiproach, he to Begwillstanding the rewho sat in the back sea turning home by an o Sik and faint. Marga comes of the barouch accepted the kind attenti offered her by the Brown Calling the comman and her accession of isabrant: for the eye of the sound with and were

at the conviction she felt of Lord Stracy's inconstancy.

Wearily did the hours pass as the party returned home, tired, and after a day of fatigue; our heroine thought horses never moved so slowly; conversation was never so dull and heavy, or friends so troublesome. But the most stupid, as well as the most delightful, excursion must have an end, and at length Brookside appeared in sight—a hasty leave was soon over, and the drooping girl was handed into the house by a brother who felt scarcely less poignantly than herself the blow which had that day been inflicted.

- "You will go to your room and lie down for an hour, dear Margaret, will you not?" said he tenderly; "sleep will do you good."
- "I will endeavour to compose myself, Lorrimer; you must think me very weak, but I shall be better to-morrow," returned she calmly. "I entreat you, as you love me, say not a word of what has happened, before we meet in the morning. I would fain believe we are mistaken." At this moment the lively Susan Murray opened the library door, exclaiming,
- "What a time you two are coming in! My uncle and I have been longing to hear how the races have gone off; and see what I have for you (exhibiting two letters as she spoke). But I do not intend you to open them until all my questions are satisfied."

was elected to be alone to I will tell y z all you de: give them to me." "Way, ver look as fameral, instead of a mer unswered Susan, laughir stresse I shall be conte voze chapter of accident tells me I have nothing while dear Margaret look of its remonstrances, th Searted Susan immediate to her macle.

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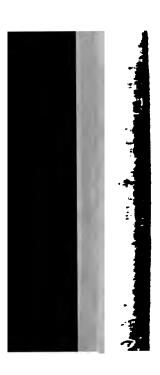
de, any thing for you!" : 24ve her the letter. " L

- "Thank you, Susan, I only require rest, I have had a very fatiguing day."
 - "Then you have not been amused, Margaret?"
 - "Not much," said her friend, sadly.
- Well! I am sure if I had been out for a day's pleasure, I should not look so gloomy as you and Lorrimer. Of course you saw Lord Stracy? and he is company enough to make any body's time pass pleasantly—Did you not see him?"

Margaret's lip quivered an instant, as she said, "I did, Susan,—though only for a moment, at a distance—we did not speak."

"Oh! then that is the reason you are out of spirits, is it, dear?—well, never mind, his Lordship will be home again to-morrow, and you can have your revenge. I always tell Lorrimer I shall pay him off now, for all his misdeeds before and after marriage. But I will not tease you any longer, you poor thing," she added, kissing her affectionately, "for you do look so wretchedly pale; quite a martyr to the gaicties of the world." Margaret could not return her smile, and felt sincerely rejoiced when Susan took her departure, promising to return in a short time with some tea.

Throwing aside her bonnet, our heroine placed herself at the open window, and for some time ruminated deeply on the occurrences of the day; until Susan, appearing with a light, and refreshment, she roused herself, and, observing the letter still unopened beside her, she broke the scal.



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To offer consulation, where source of grief, was a count only souther the sobjective entreaties to regain treased at the challition of

CHAPTER XXV.

A fearful storm is hovering; it will fall, No shelter can avoid it.

FORD.

WE will not dwell upon the sorrowful and bitter reflections of that sleepless night—the alternations between hope-fear-love and despair; it will suffice to say that Margaret rose languid and haggard at an early hour, and, long before anything else stirred in the house, was busily employed at her writing-table. Several times she leant her aching head upon the table, for a few minutes, or buried her face in her handkerchief, and wept -but still her letter progressed, and, being read, and re-read-sealed and directed, "To the Viscount Stracy, Highfield Tower,"-she sighed heavily, and took up her bible, with the intention of reading. Vainly she strove to rivet her attention on the holy volume,—her distressed mind refused to be directed; and at length she determined to try the effect of the pure morning air.



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"You are early, my d as he offered her his arm to leave your room at pi

"I could not sleep,
"and rose several hours
not be easy until I had
conduct."

"And what plan do sister?" asked the Lieu confidence.

"Can you doubt, La tremulously: "see here Stracy, to demand an o will yourself deliver—and you will give him."

"But that, dear Marg contains his consent to ye tell you I neither can not risked by being placed Stracy, such as he is." not be all you think, and I fear. I can scarcely now believe I saw clearly yesterday—might it not be a delusion?" and the fond girl looked so anxious for a confirmation of the fallacious hope she had raised, that Lorrimer grieved to be obliged to re-assure her of his own conviction of Stracy's falsehood.

"But you will not condemn him unheard, Lorrimer," said she, with some irritation, after having listened to, and in vain combatted, his arguments: -" you will not be so unjust; you must give him those letters; and, though everybody, and every thing, should conspire against him and me-I, who have so often heard his vows of constancy,-I will not believe him guilty, until I have the acknowledgement from his own lips." Her unusual vehemence of expression astonished Bentham, if it did not alarm him; never had he seen her so violent, so determined; for an instant he thought her beside herself, but the passionate flood of tears, which succeeded her last words. convinced him that an excited and over wrought mind was the reason of this angry declaration.

"My dear, dear, Margaret," he said, as he led her into an alcove, and, kneeling on one knee, supported her head on his shoulder, as she sat sobbing beside him. "Do not suppose that an act of injustice, or apparent fraternal unkindness, shall stain the first page of the register of a duty delegated to me by Robert, who, in this letter, declares that, as it is not his intention to return



again, until—"

"He is innocent—indee must be "—said Margaret her tears—" I will learn alone—No one shall rob If you have any feeling, carnestly, seeing he was wildly clasping her hand do not again tell me he is my own—"

"I will obey you, Ma gravely, rising as he spok have reason to reproach having laid up additional iself."—A pause of some is which, the mind of each withough not in the most ple

Lorrimer then said, " V be at home to day, Margai "He told me so." she re

"He told me so," she re "I will then go to High brother: "but come, it is time we should go into breakfast; you perhaps will prefer having it alone. I can easily make your excuses."

With this kind proposal, Margaret readily complied, and for several hours she was left entirely to her own meditations; for young Bentham had exacted a promise from Susan, before leaving the house. according to his sister's request, that she would not disturb her. With a heavy heart the Lieutenant set out for Lord Trefoil's, and sad were his communings as he traversed the intervening fields;-four-and-twenty short hours before, and he, in company with Margaret, had gone to meet Lord Stracy in the full tide of joy and confidence,—of confidence in his faith--though he might suspect his indiscretions. But now he was on his way to prove, or disprove, suspicions of inconstancy, grounded on eye witness-an ordeal he trembled to submit Egerton to. much as he had felt attached to him. He could not forget that he had frequently, in the early part of their acquaintance, received intimations of this fatal propensity in his noble friend; and he failed not to blame himself for allowing Lord Stracy's manners and apparent correct conduct to blind him to his real character, and the dangerous position of Margaret's happiness. True, he had never, until the previous evening. been empowered to act in any way for her, but still, had he deemed it necessary, he should have considered it his duty, only in the capacity of a



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approaching 'The Tow and his youngest son, w some time, before he sum about Stracy; when he informed, by the Earl, the until the evening, as his

come home with Jeffrey.

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"We all know what

early." said Algernon, in by ten—eleven, or tw But how is Margaret t Lorrimer?"

" Not well at all, I am returned the sailor, quie

- "And a large party besides, my Lord,—you have, of course, heard his mare won the cup?"
- "Yes," said the nobleman, "but I assure you, Bentham, I would much rather have to disemburse his losses than hear of his success on the turf. It is a dangerous occupation for youth, the grey head of age is often an ill match for 'the tricks of the trade;' but I believe this is only a freak of Egerton's; he will not pursue the sport."
- "I hope not, my Lord," was all Lorrimer answered.
- "Did he join you and your sister, Lorrimer?" asked his Lordship, fixing a scrutinizing look upon the lieutenant's countenance.

Bentham paused, and looked enquiringly at the Earl, who said to his son,—

- "I wish, my dear Algernon, you would go to the gamekeeper, with those directions I gave you just now, and then return to the house." Lord Trefoil's wishes were always commands, and he was instantly obeyed. "Now, Bentham," he continued, "will you answer my question?"
- "Certainly, my Lord," answered he. "Egerton did not even know Margaret was there, until accident brought them in contact. Were you at O—, my Lord, may I ask?"
- "I was not," said the other, "but I know those who were. Come, be candid, Bentham, have you not sought my son this morning, in consequence of yesterday's events?"

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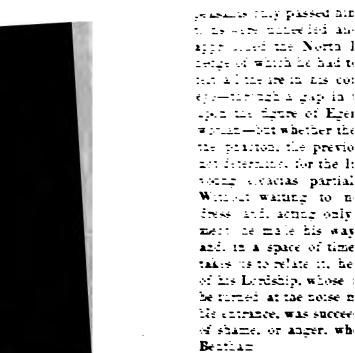
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of now, for the least said · Well," said his Lord

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to us yesterday, will be delighted to see you; she intended to ride with Algernon and Horace to Brookside, to-day, and she will certainly do so, when she hears about Margaret." Upon this, Lorrimer was conducted into the room, where the Countess and her step-daughter were occupied; and, after spending half an hour agreeably in their society, he took his leave, still more sad than when he had reached Highfield; for he felt he must occasion distress equally to the Earl's and his own family, and his intercourse with the former had endeared each, for their peculiar estimable, qualities to him. Unwilling to return home in the present state of the affair, and knowing that Egerton's movements were uncertain, he determined to go toward Lord Augustus Conway's, and endeavour to find the renegade. rather than commit Margaret's trust to a third person.

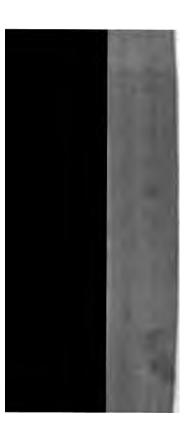
It must not be denied that Lorrimer, with all his attachment to Lord Stracy, and all his hopes of his exculpation, did feel highly and justly incensed at his conduct; and we fear we must acknowledge that, even at this moment, he had made up his mind that, come what might, Margaret should not be Stracy's wife, with his consent—and can we blame him, if he thus resolved? No: for who would be deemed otherwise than prudent for refusing to receive a gambler and a libertine as a near relation? Lorrimer must then be allowed only to have slightly erred



The latter also norm

haste, had he allowed himself time for consideration.

- "I have been looking for you, my Lord," he said, at length, in a more temperate tone than might have been anticipated.
- "And you have found me," returned Lord Stracy; "though you might have spared yourself the trouble of breaking through the fence; there is an entrance to this house."
- "Am I to take those words as an ejection, Lord Stracy?" enquired Lorrimer, struggling to controul his rising anger.
- "By no means, my dear fellow," returned Egerton, recovering, or rather endeavouring to recover, from his transient embarrassment: "I thought it would have been more pleasant to have made your appearance by means of a gate, than through those bushes."
- "I might not then have intruded myself at so inconvenient a time, my Lord," answered Bentham, bitterly; "for I should not have sought you in such a place as this."
- "You mistake, Lorrimer," said his Lordship, again colouring highly, "in supposing this an inconvenient moment for receiving a visiter. I am quite at liberty.—Mrs. Plowden," he continued to Hannah, who was walking away; "you will be so kind as to desire Ralph to come up himself about that dog of mine. Now then, Lorrimer," he resumed, "I am at your service; I am on my way home. Shall we retreat by the way



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apostate you suppose "Give me the proother, earnestly, "I ledge the proof."

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Stracy: "but I cannot "Not give it! the well founded!"

"I know not what know what you saw y

- "It will not, and shall not, suffice, Lord Stracy," rejoined the lieutenant, with irritation. "Do you think a simple assurance will efface the deeds of yesterday? deeds which have for ever set my confidence in you adrift. Yes, for ever! my Lord—a gambler—a libertine, such as I saw you yesterday, shall not wash out the stain of his misdeeds by an asseveration. No! an oath shall not!"
- "You are protected from my indignation, Lorrimer," said our hero, with unusual forbearance, "by your affinity to Margaret. Load me with what opprobrium you may, you cannot add to the agony I endured the past night—after that single glance from your sister.—Were my plain words to be credited, I would answer your questions, as far as I can, consistent with my conscience. Oaths were not made for every-day service;" and Stracy turned, and walked away, with so much deep feeling expressed upon his dejected countenance that Lorrimer's heart smote him for his injustice, and in a moment he was at Egerton's side.
 - "Stracy, I will believe you," he said.
- "I am going home," returned the other, with difficulty.
 - "We can return together."
- "No!" answered Stracy, "I will not keep company with one who believes me a villain," and his Lordship spoke with determination, and walked on.
 - "Stay a moment, Stracy," urged Lorrimer, who



into the field, which he of Lorrimer passed through

"I am charged with 1 garet," said the latter, opocket, and putting then our hero; "I know not oplace every dependance resolution. You may apyour character be free free shall not, be yours."

"That day will never Lordship, gloomily: "les see you to-night at Brook

"To explain your cond
"As far as I can, with
come, at last," he mutter
"What hour?" deman
"Nine," was the la

parted.

Before the sailor had

No sooner had Lieutenant Bentham left the garden, then Lord Stracy tore open Margaret's letter, but had not perused many words, before Madame Carrotti glided to the wicket, against which he leant—Egerton started, and looked up, as she placed her hand gaily upon his arm, for he knew that Lorrimer must see the Italian; but the look of cold assurance with which he regarded the angry flush, or the honest countenance, of the brother was admirable.

"You have ruined me for ever, Nina!" Stracy exclaimed, passionately, pushing away her hand, and flinging himself down on the ground, as Lorrimer turned the corner. "Cursed was the day and hour in which I saw you;—would to heaven I had died, before I had been fool enough to put myself in Gurney's power!" Nina stood aghast.

"Stracy," she said, again approaching him, "my kind Stracy, what has happened to agitate you thus? What have I done to merit such harshness?"

"Things beyond your and my controul, Nina," returned his Lordship, more calmly, but with resolution; "but things which I will declare to the world, even if I forfeit my friends,—my name—aye if I die for it. Where is Gurney? yet stay—I will first know my doom," and, with a bound, he rose from the grass.

"My letters-"

"Are here," said Nina, picking them up from where they had fallen when he cast himself down, "but do not read them, if they give you pain."



manner.

"You shall be an ackn but leave me, I am not when Gurney comes.—Idi when she retreated. "I better—far better, to face constant dread." Leanin re-opened the fatal letter, feelings the reader may lines:

Dear Egerton, for you are st confidence in your love is shal day. Oh! Stracy, how fondly one but myself can tell—but I on earth—my Maker—my love heavenly and earthly comforts! best treasure? must I cease to who has, and ever will possess, but I dare not write the word inconstancy—your perjury. Y

vention of the wicked. Come, then, as soon as you receiv this,-tell me all, and I will believe-will bless you. hardly know what I write, -I think my brain is turnedmeant to upbraid, to reproach you, but I cannot-though i this my trust, my love, have been misplaced—if myexpression of confidence be unworthily excited ;-never-never-wil I be yours, never will I see or speak to you, after the con fession has passed your lips. Yet, relieve my mind from thi terrible uncertainty; say I have not loved in vain, fo Robert has consented to our union, and I am yet your own MARGARET BENTHAM.

One, two, three times did Lord Stracy run his eyes over this document, before he fully comprehended it, and then he said, with a slight ray of hope and pleasure on his pale cheek, "Dear angelic girl, I am not worthy of you, though I am not so bad as you suppose me. You shall yet be mine, if penitence and candour can repair past errors;" and he pressed the letter to his lips fervently — then looked at the second epistle, which confirmed Margaret's, with regard to the marriage, and for some moments indulged in a train of deep and painful thought. He then entered the farm house, and was instantly in the presence of Nina. "William not here yet!" he said, then, observing her beautiful eyes were moist with tears, he pursued, as he took her hand, "You are unhappy, Nina."

"Oh! no," she replied, "only your words just now recalled days that are gone, and regret must follow thoughtlessness and folly. But let me ask you, in return, what has happened to you?" and VOL III. O



"He did not name a Lord," answered his co getting late, and he will until after dinner."

"Well!" he said, aft
"I can wait a little whe
an hour they continued
of the Captain's arrival
sorbed and melancholy
note, and said to Nina
little work-table, "The
that, Nina, and tell him
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he added, kindly, raisi
"good night, you do no
do you?"

She replied in the neg look so ill, my Lord, I de without some refreshment something."

"Oh! I shall be well am only worried, my k good night:" pointing 1

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CHAPTER XXVI.

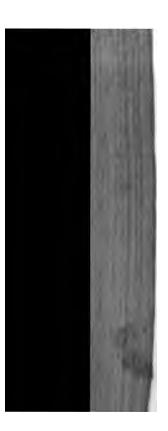
So dear I love him that with him all deaths
I could endure; without him live no life.

MILTON.

It was six o'clock when Stracy reached High-field—he did not enter the paternal mansion with the elasticity of happiness; but with the trembling step of consciousness and fear. His father's step, in the hall, brought the absent colour to his cheek, for he foresaw it would be impossible to escape unseen to his room, as he had intended doing. He, however, continued on his way, and meeting the Earl at the foot of the stairs, he endeavoured to accost him as usual:

"I hope I am not late, sir," he said, apologetically, seeing Lord Trefoil was dressed. "I intended to be punctual."

"Your intentions I believe, Stracy, are often better than your actions," answered he, gravely, —nay, almost solemnly, but at the same time



and natural feeling puseverity.

"I have not been que Lord," said Egerton, hu thing, and will pass off as "I hope it will, Egerto sitions of both mind as rejoined the Earl, earnest

"They shall, my Lord solutely. A ray of ple features of the old nobl and he continued on his Lord Stracy sought his slowly he proceeded wi toilette, and, unlike hims admit his brother, or Hordeportment was changed about him, and he appe weight oppressed his me

This, however, he stro joined the family—he ta perceive that he hardly that his thoughts were caddressed himself princi answering Algernon's questions. Thus passed an hour and a half, the ladies were gone, and the wine had circulated oftener than usual; for Egerton seemed devoted to the claret, while the Earl, according to custom, dozed in his chair. At length our hero rose, as he looked at his watch, saying

- "I have an appointment at Brookside tonight, Horace, which I must keep, so you will tell my father if he ask for me——"
- "An appointment, Egerton," repeated the Earl, who had been roused to consciousness by that single word.
- "Yes, sir, at Captain Beresford's," replied his son, firmly.
- "I will walk with you," returned Lord Trefoil rising; "the evening is mild, I believe."
- "Quite, my Lord," said Horace, to whom he appealed.

"Ring the bell, and I will order the carriage to fetch us home, then. Will that suit you, Stracy?"

Egerton, who had hoped to avoid an explanation with his father a little while longer, looked uncomfortable; but he simply said, as he left the room in quest of his hat, "Your pleasure is mine, my Lord."

"That is well," said the Earl, sotto voce, "that is well."

Algernon's solicitations for permission to join the party were rejected; and, taking the arm of his heir, the old man commenced the walk,



elizible mode of comm underdei wietler to seventy: and Lord S term a conversation lead to reproof and however, the former sa - Yea bave seen Street ! - Yes. su." "And did any es viz " The Viscount - Ererton," resumed us he looked fixedly a suppose you are igno great cause, both he ar with viri he told me investigate your conduc to communicate the g I am convinced, from served, ther were of a those suspicions been among all your faults

trackly." added the l tased: " and I hope it

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- "You shall not be disappointed, my Lord," returned Egerton. "If candour only were required to clear up this business, it would not now be undeclared, but—perhaps, my Lord, if you were in my position, you would have declined making any confession to Lieutenant Bentham, as I did."
- "You refused!" exclaimed the Earl, suddenly withdrawing his arm from his son's; "then my hopes, my affection, deceived me; you have deceived me, Stracy."
- "I have, my Lord," returned he: "but not in this instance. I am now going to Brookside to avow the truth my want of courage would have veiled this morning."
- "Right—right, my boy," replied his father, as if relieved of one part at least of his trouble; when all the mischief is known, half the difficulty of its consequences is over; we can then set about repairing it."

Egerton shook his head as he replied, "Had I dared hope my errors were capable of reparation, sir, I would not so long have risked this suspicion and humiliating discovery. But I have heard you so solemnly inveigh against the vice, which any disclosure on my part must bring to your knowledge, that I own I have been weak enough to be led with my eyes open to my own destruction, and, by seeking to retain your good opinion, father, I must lose both it and Margaret's love."

"Let us hope not," said the Earl, who was surprised, nay, even somewhat melted, by the apparent contrition, and the passionate tone in which he spoke. "Whatever you have done, I attribute more blame to William Gurney than you. He is, and has been, the principal promoter of your follies, I believe, the last few years. I have often told you I disapproved of your acquaintance."

"You have, my Lord; and I know, to my cost, you were right. He has used me foully; and, had I possessed your foresight, I should never have involved myself in all this anxiety and trouble."

- "But tell me, Stracy"—began the Earl, when his son, interrupting him, said,
- "Do not ask me now, my Lord; I cannot tell you any thing until I see Margaret. To her I appealed in the presence of Lorrimer this morning, and to her I will tell all; yes, all she has asked me."
- "I will wait," returned Lord Trefoil; "but can you account for keeping that woman, Stracy?" and he lowered his voice to a whisper, as if almost afraid the fields and hedges even might hear the doubt.
 - "I can, sir," said his son, confidently.
- "Thank God," ejaculated the other fervently, again accepting Egerton's support; "for to the accidental discovery of Nina's presence at the farm, and the doubts and fears that circumstance

HIGHFIELD TOWER.

raised in his mind of Stracy's fidelity, was to be attributed much of Lord Trefoil's anger. Such an unhesitating assurance of the falsity of his suspicions from lips which had never been convicted of untruth, could not fail to give the fond, though stern, parent, the truest pleasure; and, to mark his confidence, not another question was asked—not a syllable was said, as the father and son continued to walk on, until they reached the Captain's.

On the lawn Lorrimer met them, and seemed to comprehend, at a glance, the cause of the Earl's visit; for, with a cordial salutation, he led him into the house, saying to Stracy, "Margaret will not see you to-night, my Lord; she is too unwell."

- "Then our visit is useless, Bentham," he replied, resolutely stopping in the doorway of the room where his father had already entered. "I will not confess to any but Margaret."
- "It is not the culprit's vocation to dictate the terms of submission, I believe," returned the sailor angrily.
- "I hold the keys of the casket," rejoined Egerton in a tone of provoking calmness.
- "You cannot expect, Lord Stracy, answered the other, "that I should believe your faith, after this morning's confirmation of your untruth; or that I shall suffer my sister to meet you."
 - "Yes, I do," returned Egerton; "and I

which plainly shewed the tumult of her feclings. With more than usual kindness, Lord Trefoil again placed her close to Stracy; himself taking his post on the other side of her: while Lorrimer, the indignant, but impotent, Lorrimer, secured the door, and drew his chair near them.

- "Margaret," said Stracy, in a tone of the greatest tenderness, "in your letter you put but three questions to me; which, were I simply to answer, would not satisfy you or me, and only entail others. May I then enter regularly, in my own way, on my defence, or would you cross-examine me?"
- "Tell me—tell me how you like, Egerton," she said in a faltering voice, again putting her hand into his, while the large tears coursed each other down her pale cheek. Lorrimer looked on the point of offering some opposition, but Lord Stracy instantly rejoined,
- "I knew I should have justice from you, Margaret, and in return you shall have the truth, though I suffer deeply for it. To reply, as I ought, I must go back to the first days of our acquaintance,—perhaps even before that,—for, during my residence abroad, I imbibed that taste for trifling with those gay continental Ephemera, for which you heard me denounced. I continued a folly which soon became a habit on my return, and was led on by my thoughtlessness to do mischief, when I only intended to furnish myself with amusement; that, however, is nothing to



by William Gurney to go
That journey has been the
trouble, all my grief, and
had known each other s
previously travelled toget
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bowl; I was young and
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ney, I had found my way
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Stracy for an instant pause by saying, "I already of which I gave him a bon able, and I soon returned when once on the other sifather, Margaret," he prochis only auditor, "alway from a boy, ever allowing this vice; and when, night a Gurney with my I, O, U,

at these words, but he pursued immediately, "I refused at last to accompany him any more, but he declared, unless I continued to remain with him, he would expose me-would take the bills to the Earl. What could I do, but yield? My father's good opinion was at stake, and I saw, too late, I was too far in his power to escape. It was in vain to curse—to execrate. I was caught, and Gurney only laughed at my railings. Virtuous! thrice virtuous, must he be who can withstand the taunts of the wicked. I could not; but I feigned illness, and he went that one night alone. We had not then been in France a month, and I wished to leave, but could not prevail on Gurney to return home, for he had become desperately-madly, enamoured with a young Italian."

Unconsciously Margaret rivetted her eyes on her lover's face, his hand was locked tighter in hers, and the attention of the Earl and Lorrimer was, if possible, increased. "He had been engaged to his cousin, Isabella Conway, some time, but he used to rave about the superior charms of this stranger, who was living some miles from Paris with her mother; and many were the days and hours he used to pass at the Chateau of ——. It was the morning after I had successfully opposed him in going to the gambling table, that he induced me to go with him to Madame Carrotti's. Nina was and is every thing that is amiable. I spent a day of

pleasure, and an evening of joviality; neither Gurney nor I were sober when we returned, and that night I lost nearly double the sum I previously owed him; whether by fair means or foul I know not. I have only a faint recollection of what passed; some proposal was made me, with which I closed. I signed my name to a paper he presented, and in the morning, when reason had resumed her sway, I found I had taken an oath to procure and conceal the abduction and marriage of Nina Carrotti and himself, on condition of his forgiving me all my debts. I felt I was wrong, but I saw no means of escape; my father's words in my hearing as a boy still sounded in my ears, and were these: 'If any son of mine should so far forget my instructions as to involve himself, by play, to the amount of five thousand pounds, he shall forfeit his father's affection and every farthing it may be in my power to alienate from him; for it would only be a false kindness to furnish him with the means of prosecuting a vice which might be his ruin in after years, when in the enjoyment of a title.'

"I knew the Earl's strict adherence to his word, Margaret. I knew the property was to pass away to the next heir, if a certain sun were gambled away by the possessor of the Earldom, and I was subdued. The morning ratified what the evening had effected, and within one month Nina became his wife, without

oll me all this!

his, or her friends', consent. She it was you saw yesterday, my own adored Margaret," cried Stracy, dropping on one knee beside her. "Gurney married her according to the forms of the catholic church, and, as a legitimate wife, I have ever regarded her, though I fear not to acknowledge the possession of her friendship."

With a sob of over-excited feeling, Margaret dropped her head upon her lover's shoulder, and, as he fondly pressed her to him, she murmured, "I knew you were my own."

"Stracy," exclaimed Lorrimer, warmly, "as a man of honour, I may now again regard you, though I am not yet satisfied—your hand.—"

"Shall not grasp yours, lieutenant Bentham," returned the viscount firmly, "until the slur you cast this morning on my veracity be retracted. My father," he proceeded, laying the hand he had refused Lorrimer upon that of the old nobleman, who seemed astounded by his son's communication, "I will not ask a mitigation of my sentence. I know I deserve your displeasure, but hear the few more words I have yet to trouble you with, and, believe, I have erred rather through folly and inexperience then criminal intention."

"My boy, my dear boy," returned Lord Trefoil, in accents of sorrow, rather than anger, as he looked at the open countenance of our hero, "whatever may be the extent of your faults, fear not to declare them; remember I am your father—your friend, Stracy. Why did you not sooner tell me all this?"

For an instant Egerton appeared unable to answer the unexpected kindness of his austere parent; and his lip quivered as he said, "I fear I never knew the value of my father, sir, until this moment, when I have almost, I dare not think quite, forfeited the blessing:— but dearest Margaret," he said, turning to her, and gently rising from his kneeling posture, "you are not well to-night; will you not retire? I have told you all that you asked me, and it is now for you to determine whether the gambler be unworthy your love." Again Stracy resumed his seat on the sofa, as he spoke the last words, and Margaret, to the surprise of all, replied, in a tone of unnatural composure,

"When I allowed my affection to be gained, Egerton, it was not in the expectation of securing an immaculate husband. I know that you, in common with myself and all mankind, were and are erroneous, and, although I condemn your conduct, I remember that an avowed fault is half amended."

"You will then forgive me?" eagerly asked his Lordship.

"I love," faltered Margaret, almost choked by her feelings, at the same time giving him her hand, which he fervently pressed to his lips, though he did not immediately reply.

"My Lord," said Lorrimer, more kindly than he had previously addressed him that evening, 'let me entreat you to give me the power to onfirm Margaret's gift. Prove your words—

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prove Gurney's marriage, and your compulsion to do his bidding; but no," he added, as if suddenly recollecting himself, "why should I ask? my sister shall never marry a discarded son, though he were a prince. Margaret you must not."

"Oh! but you will not punish us so severely,, my Lord, will you?" cried our fair friend, turning her streaming face imploringly to the Earl, who, we think, we have already said, had become sincerely attached to his future daughter-in-law.

"Egerton must explain himself farther, before I can decide that question, Margaret," replied he, in his usually grave tone; for all his natural severity returned, where he found his heart assailed in the most vulnerable part, namely, that of his recently-engendered affection for Miss Bentham.

"That he will readily do, sir," said Stracy, "the Rubicon is passed, and the way is not now difficult. You asked me why I did not inform you sooner that Gurney was married? Those bills—those bills for eleven thousand pounds, which he holds, were, and are to be, laid before you, if I breathed a word which might lead to his uncle's being apprised of his union with Madmoiselle Carrotti; and I well knew, my Lord, that your long established friendship with Lord Augustus would not permit you to aid or abet the deception Gurney thought it expedient to maintain for a time, in consequence of his projected union with Miss Conway. Disgrace and



 The old nobleman withdrew his hand, coldly, saying, "If Lord Stracy were led to the gaming table by example, and even compunction, ask him, Margaret, what induced him to take to the turf?"

Margaret still held the rejected hand of her lover, as her eyes anxiously entreated him to reply, but she could not speak. Until this moment, Stracy had maintained an air and manner of sorrow and humiliation, but, when his father assumed so haughty a tone, anger flashed across his face, and he replied hastily,

- "I thought by that means, my Lord, to pay my debts. I own it was a desperate measure, but the remedy must be proportioned to the extremity of the case. By the proceeds of my speculations yesterday, I paid off a considerable sum to Gurney, but never—no never will I hazard another pound in that way."
- "And how am I to be assured of that, Egerton?" enquired the Earl, looking steadily at his son.
- "By the deep—the fearful oath I voluntarily took last night, my Lord, that, for the future, I would sooner step alive into my coffin than enter a betting ring."

Lord Stracy's three auditors shuddered at his fervency: Margaret caught his hand, and sobbed bitterly on his shoulder, while Lorrimer and his father simultaneously stretched out their hands, each saying, "I believe you, Egerton."

we must leave to the imagination of our readers to determine; as we immediately returned to the side of Lord Trefoil, whose agitation was partly removed by the prompt administration of a glass of Madeira. It was at the Earl's suggestion that Margaret followed our hero, with the request that he would return to attend his father home; but, in reality, with the view of affording the lovers an opportunity of unrestrained conversation, which he felt sure would be the best restorative for Egerton's wounded feelings.

During the short period of their absence, Lord Trefoil ascertained, from the lieutenant, that, although he should consider it his duty to suspend his sister's marriage with Lord Stracy, for a time, yet he should hope, at a future day, to be able to resign her conscientiously to him as a wife. "This, however, must be, my Lord," he said, "when your son's character is purified by age and repentance from the stains which have been left by his follies. Margaret's love I know is Lord Stracy's, and I will not blight her young hopes, if possible; but she shall be removed from this neighbourhood, and, I trust, her own good sense will show her the propriety of resigning all idea of matrimony for some time."

Nearly half an hour had elapsed, before Egerton led his fair companion into the room, whence he had so hastily retreated; both were melancholy, but calm, and composed, and a single look of love and hope was exchanged, as they approached



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riage, which was in wa

Highfield. He then explained bi deferring the marriage for the distant hope of quitted Brookside a ha than he had entered it, and then, been sorely cl During their drive, Stracy that it was at Augustus Conway's, the had learnt his son's su pointed out the neces: existed for Egerton's a Priory, and declaring and duplicity of Captai. volved himself, in some But he did not revert to evening, only saying, a

Viscount for the night, Stracy expected, or, p

CHAPTER XXVII.

Who needs a teacher to admonish him
That flesh is grass? That earthly things are mist?
What are our joys but dreams? and what our hopes
But goodly shadows in the summer cloud?
There's not a wind that blows but bears with it
Some fainbow promise—not a moment flies
But puts its sickle in the fields of life,
And mows its thousands, with their joys and cares.

KIRKE WHITE.

A NIGHT of restlessness and deep self-reproach, together with firm resolutions of amendment, and gratitude for his father's forbearance, brought Lord Stracy to the dawn of another eventful day. Early he rose, and, unwilling to answer, or repel the questions, which might attend a meeting with Horace, Lady Clara, or his brother, he wandered into the park; and, in deep thought, reached the spot where stood the modest column he had designated the 'Stracy ladder of promotion,' in the early days of his arrival at Highfield.

How widely different were the feelings with which he now vacantly regarded it, to those with which he considered it less than twelve months before. Then the world, and every thing in it, was gay, and smiled around him—the light-hearted carelessness of youth stamped him a votary of pleasure; no troubles had yet checked the exuberance of his spirits—no anxiety lay heavy at his heart. But now, two short days had served to banish the smile of happiness from his lip, and fastened a settled gloom there in its place. Once his Lordship had thought this seclusion too deep for his presence; and, at the present moment, he hailed it as the most delightful for his meditation.

How quickly our sentiments change with circumstances; one moment we dislike—and condemn that which the next turn in fortune's wheel makes us consider the only desirable possession! Noiselessly opening the little gate, in the slight protection round this sacred spot, Egerton

Sat him down at the pillar's base, And past his hand athwart his face, Like one in dreary musing mood; Declining was his attitude:

and in this place he carefully reviewed his past and present conduct. He felt satisfied that, in his present circumstances, he had done all he could to repair his faults, and a bright ray of hope dawned in his heart, as he thought of his own loved Margaret. But over his father's intentions a mysterious uncertainty extended, which made him shudder; though, to turn to the contemplation of his transactions with Captain and Mrs. Gurney, was even more painful, for remorse—shame, and anger, then claimed him for their own. 'As thus he sat all heavily,' time flew by unheeded, and he was not recalled to himself until a voice was heard behind him, propouncing his name. Starting up, he exclaimed, with a face of ill-suppressed passion, "Gurney! by what authority do you dare intrude yourself here upon me?"

- "By your own, Lord Stracy," returned the Captain, coolly, drawing Egerton's letter from his pocket; "you appointed me, I believe, to meet you here, if I had aught to say."
- "I did, sir," returned Egerton, haughtily, "and in the presence of my father I will listen to you."
- "You will listen to me here, my Lord," auswered the other, authoritatively, "my business does not require a father's interference. I tell you, Stracy, you are a traitor; and, if you dare expose my marriage, I will make you rue the day you were born."
- "Your secret is not in my keeping now," replied our hero; "I have cleared myself, as far as it lay in my power, from the obloquy of participation in your vices, and you must gain over more than one if you wish to conceal it," and Stracy smiled contemptuously as he spoke.
- "Then you have now thrown your debts into the opposite scale, I suppose," said Gurney, looking angrily at his companion; "for I de-

you, again, to acknowledge your wife, before it be declared you have such a tie without your consent—for Nina's sake—I do not say mine, now, because I have taken my fate into my own power."

The Captain's lip curled high, and an expression of the utmost scorn overspread his features, as he listened with apparent calmness to his companion. Stracy's anger had passed away, and, with a sparkling eye, he made his request in favour of Mrs. Gurney.

"Am I to thank you for your kind interest in my wife, my lord," said the soldier, sarcastically, "or will your mistress recompense you in person?"

For one brief moment, Stracy paused, as if to recover the surprise produced by this speech, but he then replied, with a crimson cheek, "Villain! dare you impeach your wife's fidelity?"

"I dare tell you, Lord Stracy, that I believe Nina loves you," replied Gurney; "I dare tell you that, as an injured husband, I demand redress; and I dare tell you that you are a dastard—and a coward, if you fail to answer my challenge."

"You may dare say much more, before I give you the satisfaction you desire, Gurney," answered Egerton, passionately: "your wife is pure as a snow-wreath, but—for Margaret's—for my father's sake, I will not fight."

"Then take that, and be d-d: will nothing rouse you?" exclaimed the other, furiously strik-

ing our hero a tremendous blow with the whole of his strength, for he was completely excited to madness by his inability to provoke Egerton.

The young Viscount staggered backwards, ejaculating "Coward;" and, being totally unprepared for such an attack, he fell heavily on the marble steps of the column, the snowy whiteness of which were in a moment stained with the warm life blood of the ill-fated Lord Stracy-for, in falling, his hat was displaced, his head exposed, undefended, and the corner of the step entered deep into his left temple. A groan of agony issued from the parted lips of the unfortunate young man; and the guilty Gurney stood horror-struck and alarmed, for one dreadful moment, before he threw himself down beside the still palpitating body of his former friend. Almost livid, with consciousness, remorse, and fear, he raised the bleeding head: but another groan of pain made him replace the wounded sufferer on the short velvet turf, and, starting up, with the fury of a maniac gleaming in his eye, he rushed to the bank of the lake, to procure the aid of some of the translucent element before him. he stooped to fill his hat, the voice of Algernon was heard, calling his brother, and, in the succceding instant, the boy appeared in sight, and, perceiving a figure at the water's edge, exclaimed before he had time to recognize Gurney,

"Why did you not answer me, Egerton? I have been calling you this half hour. Oh! Captain

Gurney, is it you?" pursued he, as the guardsman, dropping the hat, turned round and stared wildly at him—"do you know where Stracy is?"

"There,"—answered he, catching hold of the boy with one hand, and turning him round, while with the other, he pointed to the senseless body, "there he lies—and I killed him."

The last words were unheard by Algernon; with a spring, like the terrified deer, he bounded to where Stracy lay, and, falling on his knees, he shrieked, rather than exclaimed, "Oh! God! he is dead!—no, he breathes," he added, as he bent his face down to the mouth of our hero,—"some water, Gurney—quick, for heaven's sake!" But the Captain moved not, he was paralyzed, and Algernon shouted again and again for assistance, as he bound his handkerchief round his brother's head, to stop the effusion of blood, before Gurney appeared in any degree to recover his faculties.

"Will you go to the house and call for help?" cried the youth, at length impatiently shaking his companion by the arm, with a force the urgency of his fears called forth. "Are you mad, to stand staring here, when you ought to help me—for heaven's sake! fetch some one, and order the doctor to be sent for—Stracy will die, if you do not make haste," and again he shook him wildly.

"Yes—yes, I will go," cried Gurney, as if suddenly awaking from a trance; and his thoughts all turning upon escape from the scene of his

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What pen can describe the grief which shook his frame at the piteous sight which awaited him, or who can tell the distress with which he contemplated the body of his first born—his beloved son—a son he had parted from a few short hours before, in the midst of health and youth—a noble generous boy, although an erroneous one. We feel convinced that, in attempting such a task, we must fail; but it is a well-known fact that parents have generally a secret preference for that part of their offspring which causes them the most uneasiness, and so it was with Lord Trefoil and Egerton, for he loved his son to idolatry, with all his errors.

The venerable Earl, totally prostrated by his unlooked-for affliction, and agitated by the events of the night before, was obliged to be led home by Horace and his sole remaining heir, whose fond young heart was swelled almost to bursting, as he strove, with a noble disregard to his own feelings, to soothe the distracted mind of his father. The surgeon, who had been sent for instantly the distressing intelligence had been received, was fortunately encountered on the road from K——, and he lost no time in obeying the summons. It was therefore Mr. Donn himself who stood at the door with the female part

sation was visible; and, as the Earl again repeated "Is there hope?" In a scarcely audible whisper, he replied, solemnly, "There is hope—and mercy in heaven, my lord, but I fear his life has fled for ever."

The father's head dropped on his bosom, as he clasped his hands, saying, "May God have mercy on him and me!" Horace buried his face in his hands, as he leaned for support against the large book-case which stood behind him, and his chest heaved convulsively; while Algernon, who had been kneeling beside the couch, burst into tears, and sobbed bitterly, as he imprinted kiss after kiss upon the hand hich had so often—so fondly guided him from infancy.

Notwithstanding the doctor's opinion, however. of its inutility, every exertion was made to restore animation for some time, but without effect, and the unhappy father was at length compelled to quit the side of his beloved, but inanimate Stracy. Algernon was forcibly conveyed from the room-messengers were dispatched in various directions, and, in a short time, the mansion assumed the awful quietude which characterises the abode where death has intruded his unwelcome scythe. The circumstances attendant on Lord Stracy's decease were peculiarly distressing to his family; for, independent of their general attachment to him, they felt that he had been cut off in his prime, at the very period when the errors of youth had been confessed, and repented

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Though her eye shone out, yet the lids were fix'd, And the glance that it gave was wild and unmix'd With aught of change, as the eyes may seem Of the restless who walk in a troubled dream; Like the figures on arras, that gloomily glare, Stirr'd by the breath of the wintry air, So seen by the dying lamp's fitful light, Lifeless, but life-like, and awful to sight.

BYRON.

UNWELL—agitated, and fatigued;—but more—much more, happy, than she had been two hours before, Margaret retired to rest immediately on the departure of the Earl and Lord Stracy; and there, in the privacy of her own chamber, she poured out her soul in prayers for her lover to the Almighty, while her tears fell fast and silently on her book. But her mind soon recovered itself, and she pressed her head upon her pillow; in the sweet confidence of love and hope. From what Lorrimer had said, she felt sure that he would only postpone, not destroy, their happiness; and, she at length fell asleep under the delightful

impression that the bright smile of her future husband would greet her in the morning. Poor girl! her dream of bliss was indeed soon dispelled—soon changed to a vision of horror! She slept late, for mind and body were equally wearied, and the first object she saw on unclosing her eyes, was Susan, who said, tenderly,—

"Well! dear, I hope you are better-well enough to read this letter from Jessy, which has just arrived; and, I am so anxious to hear its contents that I was half inclined to wake you-only you looked so happy."

"I shall be very glad to render you so likewise. Susan," she replied, faintly smiling; "so break the seal, and read it to me, whilst I dress—you should have called me earlier, for I am better this morning. Stracy is not here yet, I suppose?" Being answered in the negative, the epistle from Hastings was read, and commented upon, and then, contrary to Susan's proposal, Margaret left her room for the breakfast-parlour, where her brother and Captain Beresford little expected to see her. However, though pallid, she appeared so greatly renovated that each was pleased to find their fears for her health had been uncalled for, and for an hour all went on well.

It might have been about twelve o'clock, that Lorrimer proposed that his sister and Susan should accompany him in a walk, to which both consented, though the former scarcely felt equal to such an exertion; and each hastened to equip herself. Five minutes elapsed, and the gentlemen still continued to study their books, in anticipation of the return of Margaret and Susan, when they were interrupted by the sudden entrance of the man-servant, who, on handing a note to the lieutenant, remained with all the freedom of an old and favourite domestic—standing, door in hand, to watch the effect of his communication; while his countenance betrayed the anxiety of his mind.

"Good heavens!" cried Lorrimer, turning ashy pale, as his eye glanced rapidly over the scarcely legible lines: "Captain Beresford, see here, does not my sight deceive me? Oh! Stracy," he ejaculated, as he put the billet into the hand of his friend, and started up wildly, "James!" he added quickly "who brought this?"

"Jeffreys, sir," returned the servant, sorrowfully, "and he says, sir, the greatest distress prevails at Highfield Tower, for dear Lord Stracy fell by the hand of Captain Gurney. Is it indeed true that he is dead, sir?" pursued he, as Lorrimer for a moment pressed his hand over his eyes.

"Too true, indeed, James," said Captain Beresford, as he gave the note again to Lorrimer, who was unable to speak. "Tell Jeffreys," he proceeded, "Mr. Bentham will attend to Lord Trefoil's wishes immediately. My dear Lorrimer," said the Captain taking the hand of the young sailor, as James withdrew, "this is indeed a heavy blow, but the



The mest break the sine said Lorrimer rising, the hand of his brother off I think Tulk says the Editorial heaven knows I are

tation You will inform M "I will." said Beresfor but I would willingly avnote."

This request being comstaggered towards the door Margaret, prepared for her "Lordiner," she exclain him, "you are ill. What i

"Only a sudden faintimiddless. Margaret. I as and shall soon recover." "You do not look faint,

"I are do not book faint, his sister, searchingly: " yo something. Why is Suracy " He has brought me a garet, which oblines me to

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- "I trust and believe so," returned he, with more solemn emphasis than he was aware of. "But indeed, Margaret, I must go, the Earl will be impatient."
- "Not until you tell me what occasions this haste, for I am sure something is wrong. I met James in the hall, with tears in his eyes. Lorrimer, do not hide the truth from me," and she grasped him strongly by the arm. "Has Egerton forfeited his word—is he the husband of another?"
- "No, no, Margaret, I believe he told us what was correct; but I am going to assist Lord Trefoil in some investigation. But Captain Beresford will tell you all about it, at least, all we know."
- "You have not exposed Stracy's faults, I hope!" she rejoined quickly; supposing, from these words, that Captain Beresford was acquainted with their late suspicions of her lover.
- "No," he answered firmly; "but the fact, Margaret, is that Stracy is not well this morning."
- "Not well," she repeated, as a new light seemed to flash upon her. "Has Egerton been fighting Captain Gurney? I feared that last night."
- "Tulk does not say he has, in the note, but I am going to learn more; and will bring you word soon."
 - " I shall go with you, Lorrimer, for I must



" you must tell her all."

During this collequy, L
backed into the vestible
which he now stood. A 1
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which he now stood. A 1 his face, as she mentio their bereavement, which the anxious girl, who, him, said, in accents of the unnatural calmness,

"Enough. Lorrimer, I expect; that look is suffici Captain Beresford to con parlour, without uttering Bentham took his way mind deeply imbued with rending misery he had qui it in another spot.

From the moment that on the sofa by Captain I open her lips; she seemed her fatal loss in one bri young heart was opposed note, which stated the fearful transaction; for the Captain had deemed it expedient, on finding her faculties thus paralyzed, to make her acquainted with the full extent of the accident; in hopes of eliciting that outward grief which relieves the sufferer, although it may be more distressing to the spectator. But no! all was in vain; she moved as if by machinery; she appeared to comprehend all that was said and done, but all physical power had fled; and she was incapable of using her limbs. She was conveyed to her room and put to bed—still not a word; the doctor came and prescribed, though without effect; and, by his advice, Susan spoke of Lord Stracy—his love—his virtue, but to no purpose.

Gentle, but without memory she lay;

and each effort was defeated for her restoration. Thus wore the day. Lorrimer was late before he returned, and the inmates of Brookside participated in spirit, most fully and painfully, with those of Highfield Tower.

mysterious death they deplored. Every folly—every fault of poor Egerton was now diminished in the eye of love and pity, while his amiability, his excellencies shone forth brightly conspicuous on the wreck of his follies; and regret—poignant regret, mingled with their desires of discovering and avenging the wrong which had been committed.

Yet they did not communicate their sentiments; memory was too busy with the past to heed the present moment; and, until the little white gate was passed, neither felt inclined to interrupt his own, or his friend's reverie. Contrary to custom the farm house door was shut, the windows also were partially closed, and the young men inwardly acknowledged the tribute of respect thus rendered. Gently Horace applied at the door for admittance, and in a moment it was opened by Ralph Plowden himself, whose countenance betokened the utmost grief and anxiety.

- "Mrs. Gurney! is she at home, Ralph?" asked Horace.
- "Madame Carrotti is, sir," replied the young farmer; "but I do not think she will see any one, for she is in a deal of distress."
- "Our names must be our passport; take up our names, Ralph, and say we request a few—only a very few—minutes' conversation with her."

Plowden complied; first softly opening the

radame Carre
if you will please
Ralph, on re-ente
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very ill; " and the
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" Your wife ill,"
her yesterday!"
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thy were uttered by a vious to being ushered Italian.

Nina, pale and lang on which she was reclin visitors, and, receiving ease we have already recommend them.

of this morning, we are anxious to be informed whether you can tell us any thing about the accident, or where we can learn the account of it from Captain Gurney himself?"

Nina started, as the sailor pronounced her proper name, and trembled violently as he proceeded; a tear swam in her beautiful eye; and when he paused she said,

"I can satisfy neither the one nor the other, Mr. Bentham; for I am as ignorant as yourself, or perhaps more so, on both heads. It is true, Captain Gurney did visit me this morning, but ——" and here her voice shook—" he only said Lord Stracy was no more. I fainted at the dreadful news, so suddenly communicated; and all I remember, farther, are the dreadful imprecations of the man for whom I forsook my home and country, and forfeited every friend but the one who now lies a corpse. I know nothing more, indeed;" and, for a few moments, she wept bitterly.

"Did you not hear anything last night, by which we may trace him?" asked Horace.

Nina shook her head. "It almost terrifies me to think of last night," she said, with a sigh.

- "Why?" eagerly demanded both her companions.
- "I am a wife," she replied, as she looked at the anxious countenances of her companions; at the same time displaying her wedding ring, which was the only one she wore; "and although

Lorrimer, in a breath, "how—why do you think so?"

"He promised I should be an acknowledged wife," answered the sobbing Nina; "and my husband himself declared that, sooner than be pronounced a married man, at this moment, he would — but no! I will not accuse him—his conscience will do that, as I said before; I am a wife," and she crossed her hands, as if in resignation.

"Well! we shall meet again, Mrs. Gurney," said Horace, "when I trust we may have been more fortunate in our discoveries than hitherto; for the present we must wish you farewell."

With native ease she bid them adieu; and they left the house, highly interested in the unprotected stranger, though greatly inclined to believe she was not so ignorant of Captain Gurney's proceedings as she would have had them suppose. Still they had gathered from her conversation that she thought as ill of her husband as they did: for had she not owned her fear that her friend had lost his life on her account; and, how could he have lost it, if not in a dispute? The unfortunate Stracy had told his friends, the previous night, that a serious quarrel had taken place between himself and former friend; and Horace and Bentham came to the conclusion that the intemperate soldier had, either by design or accident, revenged himself for Egerton's open avowal. The former, they were tempted to be-



concrasions, so unuccist so near the truth, wei Earl and Lord Augusti thised entirely with Lor aggrieved and incensed, criminality of his nephe contumely it brought i infidelity to his vow of and also at his secret a with a foreigner; for Lo prejudices of a man who country, had imbibed an the inhabitants of other ever, mean to say that t Earl's views for arrest Captain. No! natural gered in his heart for a child of an only and mu now no more, made him delinquent might escape tacit consent to the varie

into practice by the frien

and, after some days, it was announced to the Earl that a person, answering his description, but under another name, had embarked at Liverpool, on board a small trader. Thus baffled in his designs—the temporary excitement of anticipated revenge crushed, and surrounded by the dark reality, Lord Trefoil resigned himself to his grief, and sunk into an abyss of sorrow and illness. Not yet fully re-established from his late attack, his enfeebled constitution seemed unequal to cope with a fresh shock, and his affectionate family deplored the havoc that this heavy affliction daily, nay, hourly, made in his health.

All attempts to discover more relating to Egerton's fate were abandoned—the irreparable injury was committed—no reparation—no remedy was available, and the sorrowing inhabitants of Highfield—for all the village mourned their young Lord—the sorrowing inhabitants of Highfield resigned themselves to the sad contemplation of the last melancholy scene, which would for ever. at least in this world of trial, divide them from a noble, generous friend and patron, who had remained with them only long enough to endear him to old and young, before the hand of Omnipotence removed him hence, under such distressing-such peculiar, circumstances. It was not surprising that many of the villagers commented upon the mysterious and unfortunate early demise of the two cousins, so near the same



. Cacinon w detention, or capture, of inquest upon the body of and all its harrowing con Algernon, who was the almost the only, witness, while giving his evidence ralty be could proceed: t : folized brother were too impressed upon his tender rence; and he was remove immediately after the ne taken place. Nina, too, wh according to Lord Trefoi. agitated: but no other cir dready mentioned by her that the surgeon, who ha posed that the wound whi and which had caused his been the effect of forceor even possible, that so decould be produced by the

was conveyed home, after this distressing duty, in a state of mind more easy to be imagined than described.

The first intimation that awaited her on her return, accompanied by Horace, was the death of Mrs. Plowden, who had closed her life an hour or two before, after giving birth to a dead child. Hannah had been taken seriously ill, in consequence of the sudden shock she had undergone, in learning the dreadful news from Highfield Tower-premature confinement succeeded, accompanied with every alarming symptom-many hours of mental and bodily anguish followed, and the young wife at length fell beneath the stroke. In her last moments, when taking an affectionate leave of her husband, father, and other friends, she had requested that a small parcel from a certain drawer might be brought to her; and, when her wish was complied with—when the identical packet of baubles she had offered to return to Lord Stracy, before her union with Ralph Plowden, was placed in her hand, she said, "This little paper, Ralph, has been sealed up ever since I became your wife, and I had intended to bestow it on my eldest girl, if I should possess that treasure: but now it is my earnest desire that it may repose with me in my coffin; promise me this, my dear husband. It contains the gift of a dear and valued friend, who is now, I trust, in heaven, where I humbly hope I am going to join him." Her eyes



surely not, neither do we enquire the contents of never broke the seal, and mained in her own keeping her mother in Highfield of father long mourned his dichild—Plowden, his virtuo

CHAPTER XXX.

By those that deepest feel is ill exprest
The indistinctness of the suffering breast;
Where thousand thoughts begin, to end in one,
Which seeks from all the refuge found in none;
No words suffice the secret soul to show,
For Truth denies all eloquence to Woe.

BYRON.

And Margaret—the prostrated Margaret, how did she bear her trial? Doomed to experience all the agony of the widow, while yet she was a maid—the shock of the first intimation of her misery yet continued to oppress, yet to baffle, the skill of the faculty—a morbid sensibility hung upon her—no word passed her lips—no tear fell, but a uniform melancholy—deep searching melancholy—preyed upon her spirits, and testified the mental anguish she endured. Yet after the first few hours that followed the fatal knowledge of her bereavement; when the blow had arrested even the powers of her body; she recovered the use of her limbs, and crept about in pursuance



Assumed again sought the sourcested him to try any, power to call forth som of teeling.

of teeling.

I could support her fishert despair, said her wher tears, by taking her with a harardons experiment the other, slow what I believe it must be Miss Beatham's precarious an organ her medicine it has and unless by to-mo here. I must reluctantly her to the Earl's, when the may restore her in some myself aren't her, for I o her is great.

"But what," said Lore to be antiripated from so: "Violent illness," return that my door.

HIGHFIELD TOWER.

"I fear we must consider it in that he indeed, sir, though I think we may reason look for a cure: do not relax your endeave to divert her mind to-night, and in the mor I will see you early."

With this promise, Lorrimer and the 1 tionary separated, and again every art of medi and the kindest, the most tender, brotherly was resorted to, but in vain. A third nig painful watchfulness was added to those ali passed by the mourner, and augmented weal made Lorrimer ardently long for the arriv Mr. Donn. He came at length; and, at quarter of an hour's consultation, he an anxious brother led Margaret into his cari and directed their course towards Hig Tower. Little was said during the time. garet passively followed the directions o companions, and sat back in one corner (equipage, apparently unconscious of, or ferent to, the direction in which they conducting her; not once did she look fro window, but on passing the well-known Gates, Lorrimer observed that, for an in she clasped her hands tightly together, as might, therefore, be aware of having e the precincts of "the Tower." While t sing the park, she moved not; but whe carriage stopped, and Bentham took her saving.

"Now then, dearest Margaret," he scarcely restrain a start at the iciness

touch. Convulsively she pressed his arm, as he supported her up the steps, and he felt that she shuddered on entering the house—which inflicted a painful sensation of fear, in combination with the brighter hopes which had dawned in the sailor's mind.

Lorrimer had written on the previous evening to inform Lady Trefoil of Margaret's continued dangerous state, and her proposed visit; and had received the kindest answer from her Ladyship; entreating him not to scruple in applying to them for anything in their power, for her benefit, as both the Earl and herself should ever consider Margaret in the light of a daughter, and as one who was endeared to them by her sufferings in the same cause as themselves.

Thus assured of a welcome reception, the young officer silently conducted his trembling sister through the hall, and was met at the door of the saloon by Lady Clara, who embraced her with sisterly affection.

"You are better, Margaret," she said tenderly; "let me hear you assure me you are better." But she made no reply; two or three gasps for breath only declared her anguish, as she crossed the room, and then sunk exhausted on the sofa.

The Countess and her step-daughter were prodigal in their attentions, and for some minutes endeavoured cautiously to draw her into conversation. Their own tears flowed for her

sorrow, as well as their own; but still she gazed vacantly upon them; - her tears appeared staunched for ever; a corroding grief hung heavy at her heart, and seemed to be more confirmed as each effort was made to dispel it." Thus passed a quarter of an hour; Lorrimer was beginning almost to despair, when the door opened, and the Earl, led by Algernon and Horace entered the room. Quickly the mourner rose to meet him, to the surprise of her friends, and Lord Trefoil, with paternal kindness, received her in his arms, and, imprinting a kiss upon her marble brow, murmured, "My child—my Stracy's Margaret, you must help me to bear our loss." Large drops of agony fell from the old man's eyes, as he pressed her to his heart, and our heroine, suddenly impressed with the recollection of a similar salutation, the last time she had seen, and had listened to the confession and defence of, her lamented lover, with mingled pain and pleasure; added to the affectionate terms in which he addressed her, effected more than was in the power of art or skill; for, with a cry between a scream and a sob, she burst into a long and violent fit of hysterics, which were for some minutes uncontrolled. Pleasure, or rather satisfaction, for a moment gleamed in each eye, at this wished-for termination to their endeavours; but soon her violence alarmed Mr. Donn, and means were taken to restrain the very feelings they had roused.

But the end in view was attained; the long



Margaret, who now for capable of really feeling At her own and the I

left her with her adopted der of the day, and the her home in the carriage

Thus Bentham retraction, full of renewed ho successful issue of the and Captain Beresford.

But how transient alas ment is ever partaken of verse; and most true it is a day may bring forth. ten o'clock came; still I herrimer began to be u combatted his fears, by bable namilingness to I he was so justly attach herrimer, for a time, v

minutes clapsed, and t

- "I hope the lateness of my arrival has not inconvenienced you, Bentham; but it was not determined, until past ten, that Margaret should remain at Highfield to-night."
- "Remain at Highfield," exclaimed Susan, overhearing the last words, as the young men entered the room. "What can have induced her to do that, Mr. Tulk? I am sure the melancholy associations there must be very bad for her."
- "But tell me, Horace," said Lorrimer, as soon as the tutor had shaken hands with the Captain; "tell me more about Margaret, for I do not understand it. She is not ill, I hope?"
- "My dear Bentham," replied Horace; "do not alarm yourself, we hope there is nothing materially wrong; but Margaret has been considerably agitated by the events of the day, and Donn recommends her being kept very quiet. The Earl has, therefore, sent me to say he will keep her to-night, and you are not to be uneasy about her, for every care will be taken of her."
- "I have no doubt of that," said the brother; but I am sure you have not told me the extent of the mischief. Is she not ill, very ill?" and Lorrimer laid a heavy hand upon Tulk's arm.
- "We hope not," repeated he, "but I will tell you the whole, and then, if you wish it you can return with me and see her; for the Earl said you could do so, if uneasy."—Lorrimer started, for he now felt convinced, from these few words, that some cause for alurm existed; he did not how-

cheek," said Horace, "as we entered the gloomy apartment: she walked steadily up to the side of the dear lamented Stracy, and, taking his cold hand in hers, sunk on her knees; Clara and myself knelt beside her, and, for some minutes, the sobs of her ladyship were alone heard—I do not think Margaret shed a single tear."

Horace paused, and cleared his throat, as if unwilling to continue his tale, and a bitter sigh from Lorrimer expressed his deep sympathy with his sorrowing sister. "Finding her so tranquil, I became alarmed, lest she might relapse into her morbid state, and I rose to advise her retreat, when she followed my example, and, gently bending, pressed her quivering lips to the cold-cold forehead of him she lamented. 'Margaret,' 1 said, taking bold of her arm, 'you must come away:' but she did not move, and Clara's entreaties were equally unavailing. I then drew her forcibly away, and she uttered such a piercing shriek as chilled my blood; indeed, Lorrimer, nothing, I think, short of force, would have induced me to go through such a scene, had I known it. She darted from my arms, threw herself upon the body, and fortunately, I may say mercifully-fainted; for I do not know how we should have got her from the room, without that insensibility. Since that time she has been in a distressing state, and, as I said before, Donn is of opinion she ought not to be removed to-night."

"Poor thing, certainly not," almost groaned her brother.



if you please, though Lad say she will not leave her !

"I cannot do her any a rimer, thoughtfully, "and turn for the Earl's kindnes confidence in his assurance Horace, I will come up ear

"Well! I think you a rising to take his leave, "know."

"You must say all the Earl for me," said the Livisiter's hand with much en ill-judged kindness has be trouble upon us." A mom had departed, leaving the to the sad reflections occasi alarming event; the consectully justified their utmos Margaret was in a frightful day, and a brain fever soo brink of the grave. Despi

capable of was resorted to by each friend and well-wisher; and, ultimately, their efforts were crowned with success. After weeks of suffering, Margaret's health and strength slowly returned—a bloom once more mantled her cheek—elasticity again marked her movements; but, the mind—the soul—which had given language to her eye, and delight to those who knew her, had fled—fled for ever! and the once talented Margaret became the gentle, enduring, but pitiable maniac. The brilliant gem of mind, which had enhanced both outward and inward loveliness, had taken wing with her lover's soul, and the wreck of youth, beauty, grace, and happiness alone remained to tell that Margaret Bentham still existed!

Of the concluding scene of our hero's short earthly career, little need be said,

He is now at rest——
And praise and blame fall on his ear alike,
Now dull in death.

He was conveyed to the silent grave, amidst the regrets, prayers, and heartfelt tears of all who knew him in the little neigbourhood of Highfield; and if appearances were to be credited, he was truly and deeply mourned. The day of his interment was the last that the unhappy Nina Gurney was seen in that neighbourhood; she witnessed the solemn ceremony of one for whom she had entertained something more than friendly interest; when Lord Augustus Conway took her under his protection—procured her a

passage to her native country, where, finding mother dead, she immediately entered a con-

This measure, and her entire disregard (future fate of her husband, gave rise to the position that she knew more of Captain G than she liked, or had disclosed, but her s was never revealed, unless at the confess Shortly after the funeral, the Earl's family deserted the residence of their ancestors, a a very few weeks the villagers congregated as Mr. Prior, to discuss the probability of the port which had reached them, that the T had been sold to a wealthy citizen. To surprise, the good bailiff with sorrow conf the news, and, at the same time, communicate own intention of resigning his situation, he accordingly did, though he continued to 1 in the village. He might often be seen wa ing in the church-yard of Highfield, when many young and fair beings he had loved in little day were entombed, and where his child also "slept the sleep that knows no wak He was a welcome guest at Brookside, whe used to go, at times, to gain intelligence o family he had so long and faithfully se There, he heard of the declining state of Trefoil's health, and of his death about months after the loss of his son; having nessed the union of his daughter with Power, some months before.

mental from the house

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CHAPTER XXXI.

One fatal remembrance—one sorrow that throws
Its bleak shade alike o'er our joys and our woes,
To which Life nothing darker nor brighter can bring,
For which joy hath no balm—and affliction no sting.

MOORE.

It was on a fine afternoon in October, nearly four years after the events recorded in the last chapter, that a handsome post chariot and four drove through the sequestered village of Highfield, and rattled up to the door of the Parsonage; which although in former times ever a neat edifice, had now assumed a modest gaiety of appearance. Every thing was in a state of renovation; every thing new, clean, and tasty, and was evidently prepared for some extraordinary event. No time, however, was wasted by the occupant of the carriage in admiring the order of the little tenement, for the servant had scarcely opened the door when a tall, slight young man, about one-and-twenty, hastily descended, and was instantly in the arms of a gentleman, who rushed from the house to

worthy family I respect, and the husband of a girl I have loved for years? Ought I not indeed to be happy? answer for yourself, Trefoil."

"Well! I am truly rejoiced you are contented, Horace; but methinks I could not be happy in this atmosphere;" and a melancholy shade overspread his before smiling features; and, approaching the window, he continued, as he pointed to Highfield Tower on the opposite hill, "that view would always be a painful one to me; that church, too. Ah! Horace, you cannot be happy."

"Yet it is sweet to be near those we have loved in life," returned Tulk, mildly.

- "Well, I feel more ethereal in the regal air of Windsor or St. James's," said Lord Trefoil, with forced gaiety; "but if you like it, that is enough." Perhaps I shall feel better when I have executed the business I must perform, as well by duty as inclination. So let us go into the church soon, Horace. I came early on purpose to gain time to-day to see the monument. To-morrow must be devoted to love and you."
 - "But why not the next day, Algernon?"
- "Why, I fear I must leave you, then. I promised Francis and Clara that I would accompany them to Powers Court."
- "What! leave us so soon, my dear fellow," exclaimed the Rector; "nay, if that be the case,

saculi prefer being als " Very well. Trefoil. son bar let me order 1 he texched the bell as I Earl made a basty repo the Countess and her da " They were all well last. - answered her " Nucles for the winter. will not play the truat हेल्डे लेट्डीए क ब टाउर and his Lordship laugher the barracks are a bad i "Yet will allow she is answered Horace, smilin " By no means, my d air rising, and reaching pass our ordeal, and eighteen, instead of bei are gives us power to My mather, I know, wa the tender mercies of

"Oh! no! you know me too well to suppose my marriage will be gay; neither Jessy nor Susan wish any display. Yourself and Harry are the bridesmen, and two Misses Garnett bridesmaids; and, besides Lord and Lady Power, there will not be any one but the family."

"And Margaret, poor dear Margaret, will she not appear?" asked his Lordship, kindly.

"Her presence is quite optional," replied the Rector; "Lorrimer would not oppose her wishes either way; but she has never yet dispensed with her mourning dress."

"And what becomes of her, now you are all settling?" inquired Algernon.

"She will remain at Brookside," replied the other; "and as Lorrimer is to make Captain Beresford's house his home, until Harry finds a wife, she will be well cared for. Dear girl! we are all so fond of her that parting would be a sad word to any and all of us."

"Is there really no amendment—no hope of amendment in her mental disease, Horace?" asked Algernon, with interest.

"I fear not, Trefoil; though amiability and gentleness itself—there is an utter, total absence of intellect. She will weep over a dead bird, with all the bitterness of infantine sorrow, and yet she stands unmoved beside the tomb of him whose death robbed her of sense. Her greatest pleasure is to carry flowers to deck his grave, once ortwice a week, and, when she finds they die, she often says, 'See, my pretty pets are all faded,

figure of hope with one hand offered her the holy volume, and with the other pointed to Heaven.

For many minutes the young Earl remained alone in the chancel, for Horace would not intrude upon his fraternal sorrow; and when at length he rejoined him, Tulk led the way out of the sacred edifice in silence, for he saw that the cheek of his visitor was still wet with the tear of manly sorrow.

"I am quite satisfied, Horace," said Algernon, when they had nearly regained the Parsonage; "I am quite satisfied with all I have seen, but it is a bitter trial to recur to the past."

"Regret we must have, my dear Algernon," answered his friend, "in paying such a visit as this; but yet, selfish as we are, we cannot wish to recal the dead to life; and I trust our beloved brother—I believe I may so designate him, Algernon, is far—far less to be sorrowed for than ourselves, who are still in this state of probation."

The young nobleman made no answer, for his heart was full; and, as they reached the house, their attention was attracted to a person who appeared in search of somebody, for he anxiously scanned each cottage as he advanced.

"Pray, sir," he said, addressing Horace, can you direct me to the residence of Mr. Tulk?"

"Certainly, sir," answered he; "my name is Tulk, and I am now at my own door."

death-bed told me his real name was Captain Gurney."

"Good God!" exclaimed Lord Trefoil, starting up, and turning pale; "do I again hear that hated name?"

The stranger looked surprised, and his Lordship added hastily, "Excuse me, sir, I have not heard that name for years, and its mention harrows up past sorrows. Did you say that unhappy man was no more?"

"He died in my arms, my Lord; two days only before his and my own intended return to this country; and, with his last breath; he entreated me to convey one small packet to his father, and this one to the Earl of Trefoil, at Highfield Tower. I find that estate in other hands, my Lord, but rejoice in my good fortune in meeting you here. As he finished speaking, he placed a large letter in the hands of the young nobleman, who said.

"Are you acquainted, sir, with the contents of this paper?"

"I am, my Lord. It was I who wrote the melancholy tale and confession therein narrated, from the dying man's dictation. Remorse shortened his days, or he would now have been at a bar of justice; for he was on his way home to demand a trial, when he was arrested by the hand of death, and summoned to appear before a more awful tribunal." The good man paused: but Algernon did not immediately speak, and he continued: "I believe I may VOL. III.

years enjoyed the sweet prerogative of an adopted brother to the victim of Captain Gurney's crimes."

"You will find by that paper, my Lord," rejoined the other, "that the unhappy man did not intentionally take his friend's life, and I hope you will judge less severely of him; for his repentance was sincere—his mental punishment great."

"I promised the late Earl, my father, sir," said Algernon, mildly, but firmly; "when he lay on a death-bed, to which he was reduced by his son's fate, that I would punish Gurney, if ever it were in my power; but since it has pleased the Almighty to remove him, and grant him grace to see the error of his ways, my rancour ceases, and I hope the God of mercies will forgive him, as entirely as I will strive to do."

"Spoken like a true christian, my young friend," answered the Presbyterian minister: "I thank you much—very much—and I trust we may meet again—if not in this world, at least in that which is to come."

The young Earl bent his head in silence, and after having declined Horace's proffered refreshment, the stranger departed; being desirous, he said, of reaching the metropolis as quickly as possible, after an absence of many years.

"A most extraordinary coincidence this, Horace," said the Earl, as he unfolded the letter, as soon as they were alone.

"It certainly is," returned the rector, "parti-

cularly as you have so recently arrived; let us, however, see what the letter says."

"Read you," said Algernon, placing the confession in his friend's hand, and, then throwing himself into a chair, assuming an attitude of attention, "for I shall be a better auditor than performer." Horace readily complied, and, in a calm voice, commenced as follows:—

"Perhaps, my Lord, you will feel surprised when you see the signature of this letter, at the assurance of the man who addresses you; but retributive remorse has been for many months my constant companion, and the near approach of my last moments not permitting me to resign my-elf to your indignation and the hand of justice, as I intended doing. I have resolved to inform you, through a friend's pen, of the unintentional part I had in the death of your son; for unintentional indeed it was, although my flight may have induced you to conclude otherwise. I have heard of your wish to ascertain the facts of the whole transaction, and, to gain the peace of mind I have never enjoyed, since the fatal deed, I now detail my guilty conduct."

[Captain Gurney here confessed to having inveigled his unsuspicious companion into a nest of gamblers, or rather swindlers, of which he was one of the most conspicuous members himself; he confessed that he had defrauded him of many thousands, by means of the vilest system of deceit, and that, subsequently, he had obtained an irresistible empire over Stracy, by means of those debts, as our hero had already declared. His love for Mademoiselle Carrotti—her abduction, and subsequent marriage, were daly detailed, and the compulsory part Egerton had taken in it. Of the Viscount's honour and worth he wrote in the highest praise, and he said he had confided the care of his wife to him in Bugland, with every confidence, although with a total disregard, on his part, to Stracy's welfare. He was not, how-

ever, aware of his friend's matrimoulal scheme, until Iris arrival at Highfield, when he had not been able to make up his mind to brave the anger of his uncle, by declaring his marriage.]

"I heartlessly refused to listen to Stracy's solicitations," said the letter, "and answered by threats of bringing forward his debts, if he disclosed any thing. This state affairs were in, he suing, and I refusing and making him my tool, when he was actually detected, he again applied to me, and declared nothing should silence him longer. I became alarmed, and, to add to the empire I possessed over him, accused him of attachment to my wife, which I assured him I would make public. But even this failed to deter him from confessing his errors, and, of course, exposing me, and I therefore determined to challenge him, when I hoped he might fall."

Here succeeded a detailed account of his last meeting with Lord Stracy, with which the reader is already acquainted; after which, he forcibly described his alarm and horror at what he had done, and his immediate flight after having in vain endeavoured to persuade his wife to accompany him. Her sudden indisposition had increased his difficulties, and he had never been able to discover what had since become of her. He concluded by acknowledging the justice of his mental punishment, and regrets that he could not expiate his wickedness as he had intended.

Not a syllable was said of forgiveness in the course of the letter; for, doubtless Gurney considered it superfluous to request it; therefore Algernon and Horace supposed the natural benevolence of the stranger had prompted him to sue for it, in behalf of a fellow creature.

"This is a sad satisfaction, certainly," said fulk, as he concluded, "but I am glad—truly flad the confession has been made. Are not joe, my Lord?"

"I wish my poor father could have heard it." returned Algernon, musingly: "for myself. I do not care—the fact was enough for me. Stracy was, and is, lost to us here, and the recollection of his brotherly affection was infinitely more gratifying to me than the recal of his errors and cruel death. My father, Horace, could have derived pleasure from that letter, but I cannot."

"But the testimony this bears to his having been more sinned against than his individual staning. Algernon? that must convey pleasure, however sad."

"I had forgotten all his faults." returned the Earl, sadly, rising as he spoke; "but perhaps Bentham and Clara may taste the satisfaction I neither feel nor understand. It is time, I suppose, to go to Brookside. Shall we be moving!"

"Let me first show you all the ins-and-out of my house and grounds, Algernon," returned Tulk, it will be too late to do so to-night, and to-morrow will be a busy day. I want your opinion upon several alterations and improvements, in favour of Mrs. Tulk, that is to be."

Lord Trefoil readily complied with this proposal, and, after having descanted upon each part of the premises, he and the clergyman proceeded towards Brookside.

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CHAPTER XXXII.

Oh the heart that has truly loved never forgets, But as fondly loves on to the close.

MOORE.

"You have never told me, my good friend," said Lord Trefoil, as they resumed their walk, "how it came to pass that Jessy accepted you, after all; when you were last in town, you told me you were afraid of demanding her hand."

"Oh! that is six months ago," answered Horace, smiling. "I gained sufficient courage soon after that to plead my cause, and was delighted to find that my love was returned."

"I dare say you would have been accepted before, had you made the trial," said the Earl.

"I believe so, indeed," returned Tulk; "for Lorrimer has told me since that he learnt through Susan, many months ago, that I was quite safe, if I had spoken; but I thought Captain Beresford designed her for Harry. I now learn I was not mistaken; but the gay lieutenant has assured me and his father, over and over again, that he would not marry for any thing on earth, at present; but when he gets posted, which I suppose will not be yet, he means to claim his father's

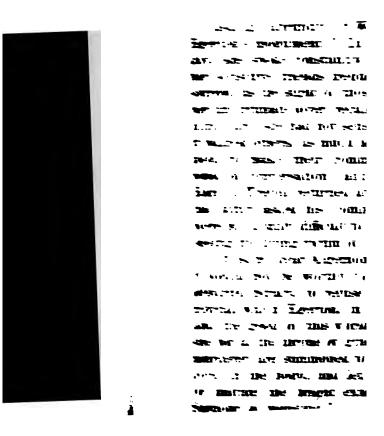


promised not to stay in her room long, and she has kept her word," he added, as the door opened, and the deeply pensive girl appeared. She was clothed in mourning from head to foot, and not an article appeared to relieve the sombre hue of her garments, save a single white rose, which she held in her hand. Yet Algernon had never seen her look so beautiful; and, as he said afterwards. she reminded him of an angel, as she advanced into the room. To Lady Power she spoke first, and pleasure shone for an instant in the soft beam of her mild eve, but the gratification of being recognised was quickly damped, when she said, with childish regret, as she stooped to collect the leaves which had fallen from her flower. "Oh! my rose-my beautiful rose, what shall I do? you have spoilt it, Lady Clara."

"You may have plenty more, dear Margaret," said Jessy Murray, "never mind that one."

The insane girl shook her head, saying, "This was the only one on my bush. I was going to take it to Stracy, you know he loved flowers, Clara; but every thing that I love dies like him. Do you think they all bloom in heaven? for then I shall not regret them, he will enjoy their fragrance." Lady Power's eyes filled with tears, she pressed her hand without answering her question, and then, turning to Algernon, said, "Do you not remember my brother, Margaret? he is come to see you."

Algernon, whose countenance plainly betokened his concern to find her in such a state.



precepts, but there are many rounds in the ladder of perfection."

"May you be as fortunate in scaling it as L wish, my dear Lord," returned Tulk, affectionately; "I always have been, and still hope to continue, proud of my pupil."

"I shall ever try to justify your opinion, Horace," said the Earl; "for it has been my ambition to occupy my brother's place in your heart. Our routes in life are very differently chalked out, but still I hope we may coincide mentally, at all times."

"There is little fear of that, Algernon, if our ends in view still continue the same. The tenant of the camp, or the pulpit, may be equally a faithful soldier, in the service of our great and universal Captain." These words concluded the conversation, for they had reached home, and, after passing an hour in canvassing the events of the wedding morning, the friends separated for the night.

The two marriages were duly celebrated at the appointed hour, in the presence of the few sincere friends who had assembled to witness the ceremony, and, while one happy couple set off for a six weeks' sojourn in Paris, the other settled quietly down in the peaceful village that was henceforth to be the scene of their duties.

The rest of the party dispersed on the following day, never again to be re-united, as it happened; for each was differently employed in after years, and, when Lord Trefoil again visited Highfield, it was in company with a young and

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